



*The Burne-Jones and Morris families
Photographed at the Grange in 1874
by Frederick Hollyer*

THE COLLECTED WORKS
OF WILLIAM MORRIS

WITH INTRODUCTIONS BY
HIS DAUGHTER MAY MORRIS

VOLUME X
THREE NORTHERN LOVE STORIES
THE TALE OF BEOWULF

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	page ix
Bibliographical Note to Three Northern Love Stories	xix
Bibliographical Note to the Tale of Beowulf	xix

THREE NORTHERN LOVE STORIES

Preface	3
The Story of Gunnlaug the Worm-tongue and Raven the Skald	7
The Story of Frithiof the Bold	48
The Story of Viglund the Fair	81
The Tale of Hogni and Hedinn	127
The Tale of Roi the Fool	140
The Tale of Thorstein Staff-Smitten	151
Notes	159
Index	161

THE TALE OF BEOWULF

Argument	175
The Story of Beowulf	179
A List of Persons and Places	275
Glossary	283

ILLUSTRATIONS

Group of the Burne-Jones and Morris families photo- graphed at the Grange in 1874 by Frederick Hollyer	frontispiece
One of a series of angels painted on the roof of Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge, from the original car- toon designed by William Morris	to face page ix



*One of a series of Angels,
painted on the nave roof of Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge,
from the original cartoon by William Morris belonging to the College*

INTRODUCTION

THE letter written in February 1873 to our dear friend Mrs. Coronio, though already published, cannot be overlooked here. The following extract gives a lively impression of my father's practical life at the moment and touches with some gravity on the life of the spirit, which, as we have seen, he seldom allowed himself to do.

"I am very hard at work at one thing or another; firm's work for one thing. I should very much like to make the business quite a success, and it can't be, unless I work at it myself. I must say, though I don't call myself money-greedy, a smash on that side would be a terrible nuisance; I have so many serious troubles, pleasures, hopes and fears, that I have not time on my hands to be ruined and get really poor: above all things it would destroy my freedom of work, which is a dear delight to me. My translations go on apace, but I am doing nothing original: it can't be helped, though sometimes I begin to fear I am losing my invention. You know I very much wish not to fall off in imagination and enthusiasm as I grow older: there have been men who, once upon a time, have done things good or noteworthy, who have got worse with time and have outlived their power; I don't like that at all. On the other hand, all great men that have not died young have done some of their best work when they were getting quite old. However, it won't do to force oneself about it, and I certainly enjoy some of the work I do very much, and one of these days my Heimskringla will be an important work."

The year was busier than ever, though as regards literary production the poet's brain was lying fallow. While in this letter he expresses a fear that he may be losing invention, in another he takes the matter philosophically: "Except the work for the firm, in which I am rather busy, I am doing nothing now but translations: I should be glad to have some

poem on hand, but it's no use trying to force the thing; and though the translating lacks the hope and fear that makes writing original things so absorbing, yet at any rate it is amusing and in places even exciting."

"The Story of Gunnlaug the Worm-Tongue" first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for January 1869, the title there being "The Saga of Gunnlaug the Worm-Tongue and Rafn the Skald," while the last page concludes with: "And here ends the Saga." It is signed by the two translators.

"Frithiof the Bold" was published in the *Dark Blue* for March and April 1871, with only my father's name on the first page as translator. It has the following footnote: "This tale is the original of the Swedish Bishop Tegner's 'Frithiof Saga,' a long modern poem which has a great reputation, but bears little enough relation, either in spirit or matter, to its prototype."

To anyone like my father, somewhat stay-at-home by nature, two foreign journeys the same year were quite an event: his first visit to Italy in the spring, his second journey across Iceland in the summer. The Italian visit—quite a short one—was made in company with Burne-Jones. In the letters written home, one feels (remembering words spoken later) that the expression of pleasure in the beautiful things seen was tinged with a certain sense of disappointment. He only visited Florence and Siena, with a day's trip to Prato and Pistoja, and it is a thousand pities, considering his quick response to the appeal of a lovely land, that there was no one to lead him out right into the characteristic Tuscan country so near Florence, where he could have feasted eyes and heart on unforgettable things—realizing many a vivid dream of ancient Italy of his own fashioning—forgetting for a little the disappointment of a city with its old walls nearly obliterated and its inhabitants in a fever to imitate the Paris of Haussmann. There are two things I specially remember about his Florence impressions that we sat round agape to hear:

first that Florence was after all a modern city crowded with old monuments (he had pictured it as a mediaeval town) and next that when one drove out to get a glimpse of the country "you went for miles between high white walls and saw nothing." And yet, at a stone's throw, the real Tuscan land was there, waiting to be loved—so lovable and welcoming: busy valleys with their sparkling poplar-shaded streams, cypress-woods starred with asphodel, lonely sunburnt heights fragrant with rosemary and pink, solemn with the beauty of a thousand years: this was the land he had looked for, and not found. I have often thought of it in my own wanderings there.

He wrote to Mother, having just been to the Duomo and Santa Maria Novella:

Florence

Sunday

[April 9, 1873]

Dearest Janey

We ended our long journey yesterday: it had been very fine all the way: for my own part I was not over-tired, though the night journey from Paris was sufficiently wearisome. All is well here, and Ned in great spirits. We went out this morning to the Duomo and S. Maria Novella, but it has clouded over now and is raining. You will hardly expect me to tell you of all the marvels in the limits of a letter; besides I am *such* a bad hand at it; I suppose in some respects we have come into Italy by the worst road: nevertheless it is all full of wonder and delight: one gets a bit tired of the eternal mulberry trees between Turin and Bologna but the passing of the Apennines thence to Florence is a wonderful journey; especially where you come out of a tunnel and see from the edge of the mountains the plain of Florence lying below you, with the beautiful old town of Pistoia within its square walls at the mountain's feet; it was something also to remember coming down into the plain of Piedmont out of the Alp, on the most beautiful of all evenings, and going (still between snow-capped mountains) through a country like a garden:

green grass and feathery poplars, and abundance of pink blossomed leafless peach and almond trees. The Duomo here is certainly the most beautiful church in the world outside;* and inside I suppose would be if it had not been made as bare as the palm of my hand. The cloisters of S. Maria Novella though is what I have seen most to my mind here.

We went through a market this morning and that was the greatest game; the lemons and oranges for sale with the leaves still on them: miraculous frying going on, and all sorts of queer vegetables and cheeses to be sold. 'Tis Palm Sunday to-day and the people are going about with bunches of olive boughs to serve for palms. The monks of S. Maria Novella make scents: I must bring you home a bottle, also I must, if cash holds out, buy a toy for the littles from the jewellers' shops on the Ponte Vecchio: the shops are a good deal shut to-day, so I couldn't see much there.

I suppose I shall stay here till next Friday, so don't write here again but write to

The Hotel Lille and Albion
Rue St Honoré
Paris.

Best love to you and the littles: don't tell them I think of bringing them a toy though. I hope you are much better.

I am
Your loving
William Morris.

Santa Croce (the inside of it), he thought "the finest church in Florence." The sight of a famous old building like San Miniato barbarously restored was a real distress to him. Mr Mackail writes: "Burne-Jones, with whom he went out, and who himself made a more prolonged stay, found him a rather exacting companion, and a little determined to make the worst of things. The interior of the Duomo at Florence

* An enthusiasm of the moment surely. I have heard his considered judgement.

depressed him with its chilly bareness: San Miniato was unfortunately in the death-agonies of a thorough restoration; and even the more unspoiled Siena failed to excite him.”*

In the summer came the second visit to Iceland, and a second instalment of all that keen excitement, with the pleasurable “young” picnic-feeling overlying the deep-laid inherent melancholy and the sadness born out of a feeling of sympathy over the sufferings of a dignified hard-living race.

The attraction my father felt towards the North was not shared or quite approved of by all his nearest friends. Rossetti and Burne-Jones both poked fun at him in their different way, and the former, as we know from an often repeated witticism, got really cross on one occasion in discussing the merits of the Volsung story. “Morris’s return from Iceland in September 1873 was announced to Mr. Fairfax Murray thus,” says Lady Burne-Jones: “Mr. Morris has come back more enslaved with passion for ice and snow and raw fish than ever—I fear I shall never drag him to Italy again. He’s very well and in good spirits.”† Lady Burne-Jones then gives one of her husband’s sketches of his friend, a grim mountain-land with a sort of Eskimo figure intended for the traveller, nursing a huge fish and driving his teeth into the middle of it.

Later on my father writes to one or two friends in a somewhat unsettled frame of mind. The flavour of Iceland still lingers about him, for one thing, and for another he was working from the model “for his soul’s sake” and that always fidgeted him badly, as we know from a previous letter. To Fairfax Murray he now says:

Queen Square

November 5th, 1873.

My dear Murray

. . . As to my Lancelot: I think in any case I should like to make another MS. of it again *myself*; also in any case you

* Life, I, 293.

† Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, II, 45.

shall have the present MS. So if you think you could send it to me *safely* I should be very glad to have it at once: otherwise it must wait till I see you. I don't know about coming to Italy in the spring: if I go at all next year and the Master goes I suppose I shall go with him. I came back from Iceland about the middle of September after a very lucky journey: I am thinner from it you will be glad to hear.

I am in a somewhat discontented mood at present: can get to no serious work, though I work many hours at trivialities: true I have made a step in getting models and have meant to take to drawing again: but I have so little hope about the whole affair that I can scarcely fix my attention on it. So that it hardly seems worth the extreme worry and nuisance it gives me: however, I shall keep it going a little longer and see what happens to me about it.

Can you talk Italian yet: you ought to be able to before I come out to see you: and I swear I *will* learn another sentence more than "Si cambia qui?" before I come out again.

I am

Yours very truly

William Morris.

Father and Mother took us children abroad at the end of July next year—the whole bunch, Phil-and-Margaret and Jenny-and-May. We made a little round of some of the Belgian towns, and were brought face to face with my father's early Flemish enthusiasms—an unforgettable time both for that and for its being our first young taste of "foreign parts," full of delicious excitements. As we crowded at the train-window nearing Dover pier we were squeaking with delight at the dark flashing sea, at the steamer waiting to carry us into the wonderful Abroad; and my child's mind, laying by memories for use in riper years, recalls as it were of yesterday something said that was among the earliest glimpses it had into the grown-up mind—even then noted in a serious flash amidst the merriment: for Father smiled across at

Mother above the scrambling swarm and said, with his heart in his voice, "It's worth anything to take the kids a treat, Janey, and see the little rascals enjoying it so."

The main lines of the tour are shown in a letter to Mrs. Coronio: "We have only had 2 railway journeys from Calais to Tournay last Saturday, and from Tournay to Ghent on Sunday: I must say I had no idea what heat was before, it was like being in a Turkish bath: after the 2nd one we by common consent determined to have no more of it than was positively necessary, and so gave up going to Antwerp and Mechlin, and hired a char-a-banc at Ghent to drive us to Bruges by road on the Tuesday: that was really a very pleasant drive, all among the pretty orchards, the ripening wheat and oats, and the rye that they are already cutting, and so at last into Bruges by the ancient Gate of the Holy Cross: it took us all day about 29 miles it is. We stay here till over Sunday, and then go to Ypres and then to Calais, and cross next Wednesday or Thursday night; I devoutly hope the first, for I most earnestly wish to be at home again: not that anything has gone wrong: on the contrary all is well and the children are very good: but travelling without time or space for musing is dreary work to me."

In Bruges, by mere chance, we had the same rooms that they occupied on their wedding-trip. My father renewed his acquaintance with Bruges with a good deal of enjoyment: something besides the history of the places appealed to him—the life of the moment was simple and serene, between the canals and the sunny gardens; so quiet and congenial that in the same letter home he remarks: "I think I shall come over here one of these days when I have some literary work to do, and stay here working for a few days by myself." However, that little reward for devoting himself for a fortnight to the amusements and needs of four lively if well-behaved children, never came. But for us, what a journey, simple as it sounds! To travel among places thronged with mediaeval associations with William Morris was, need one say it? a more vivid experience than to approach them by the trodden

pilgrims' route of Baedeker: it was an introduction into the fine company that once peopled the town-hall and the square, and clattered into the town through the Gate of the Holy Cross by which we entered it in our ramshackle *char-à-banc*, hired at Ghent for the leisurely road journey. It would take a very crabbed grown-up or a particularly lumpish child not to be warmed and stimulated by my father's eager vision of the city of many memories.

Next month he and Burne-Jones spent a pleasant time at Naworth with the Howards. The letters from there show his keen feeling for the place. "Though the weather is broken and stormy," he writes to Mrs. Coronio, "I have been passing a delightful life of doing nothing here: the place is so beautiful that one really does not want to do much, and doesn't feel it on one's conscience either. There are no visitors in the house but us and all is very pleasant: Ned and I pass our mornings in a most delightful room in one of the towers that has never been touched since William Howard of Queen Elizabeth's time lived there: the whole place is certainly one of the most poetical in England: we had a long drive yesterday all along the border, and I sniffed the smell of the moors and felt in Iceland again. The whole countryside is most poetical and full of history and legend. I think it has done Ned a great deal of good coming here. . ." This present year (1911) has made another gap in the circle, for our old friend and host at Naworth in those pleasant days, George Howard (Lord Carlisle), is gone.

Readers will understand the impossibility of my offering any remarks on my father's *Beowulf*: he had always felt an affection for the poem, and probably the plans he had formed in connection with the Kelmscott Press of publishing the literary masterpieces of the English tongue in a form worthy of them made it necessary to include it: from such a series he could hardly leave out the first epic of our race. Its greatness and its weaknesses are well characterized by one of our most sympathetic and learned critics. In a singularly happy and

illuminating appreciation of the poem which I reprint with Professor Ker's permission, he says:*

"The great beauty, the real value, of *Beowulf* is in its dignity of style. In construction it is curiously weak, in a sense preposterous; for while the main story is simplicity itself, the merest commonplace of heroic legend, all about it, in the historic allusions, there are revelations of a whole world of tragedy, plots different in import from that of *Beowulf*, more like the tragic themes of Iceland. Yet with this radical defect, a disproportion that puts the irrelevances in the centre and the serious things on the outer edges, the poem of *Beowulf* is unmistakably heroic and weighty. The thing itself is cheap; the moral and the spirit of it can only be matched among the noblest authors. It is not in the operations against Grendel, but in the humanities of the more leisurely interludes, the conversation of *Beowulf* and *Hrothgar*, and such things, that the poet truly asserts his power. It has often been pointed out how like the circumstances are in the welcome of *Beowulf* at *Heorot* and the reception of *Ulysses* in *Phæacia*. *Hrothgar* and his queen are not less gentle than *Alcinous* and *Arete*. There is nothing to compare with them in the Norse poems: it is not till the prose histories of Iceland appear that one meets with the like temper there. It is not common in any age; it is notably wanting in Middle English literature, because it is an aristocratic temper, secure of itself, and not imitable by the poets of an uncourtly language composing for a simple-minded audience."

This seems to me to explain the sort of feeling my father had about *Beowulf*. I think that among other things he was interested by the curious amalgam of Pagan Christianized elements found in the story.

Mr. Mackail gives an account of the circumstances of its publication, from which I quote these lines:†

"... To help him in following the original, he used the

*The Dark Ages, by W. P. Ker, (*Periods of European Literature*) p. 253.

†*Life*, II, p. 284.

aid of a prose translation made for him by Mr. A. J. Wyatt, of Christ's College, Cambridge, with whom he also read through the original. The plan of their joint labours had been settled in the autumn of 1892. Mr. Wyatt began to supply Morris with his prose paraphrase in February 1893. . . . It was not fully finished till the end of 1894, and was published in February 1895. It would seem on the whole, in spite of the love and labour Morris had bestowed on it, to be one of his few failures."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THREE NORTHERN LOVE STORIES

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octavo.

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THE TALE OF BEOWULF

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THREE NORTHERN LOVE STORIES
AND OTHER TALES TRANSLATED
FROM THE ICELANDIC BY EIRÍKR
MAGNÚSSON AND WILLIAM MORRIS

PREFACE

THE three excellent Icelandic stories that are printed first in this book were, in their present form at least, written respectively in the thirteenth, the fourteenth, and the fifteenth centuries: the earliest of them, the "Gunnlaug," has even been assigned by tradition to Ari the Learned, the father of Icelandic history: the names of people and the genealogies given in it, as well as the names given to their habitations, are found to agree with what we learn about them from other early records; and, in short, it must be called an historical tale, in spite of anything marvellous or mythological that is to be found in it.

The "Frithiof," on the other hand, is an example of the large class of romantic stories that took their present form in the fourteenth century, though it can scarcely be questioned that something of them must have existed in some guise at a much earlier date. Though the Frithiof Saga is not mentioned in any earlier work, it bears in one part signs of its having had an earlier form: for some of the (apparent) prose of it is really verse; and it is remarkable that this happens in the typical part of the tale, viz. where Frithiof comes disguised to King Ring.

The "Viglund," again, in spite of its story being localised definitely enough, is confessedly nothing but a pure fiction, and in more than one place the tale-teller has borrowed from earlier stories: *e.g.* the incident at p. 121 from the Frithiof; and the fight in which the sons of Holmkell are slain from the story of Helgi and Grim, the sons of Droplaug. It should be mentioned that the melody given in it is an old traditional one in Iceland, and may be taken as an example of the sort of tune to which the staves of verse in the Sagas were sung.

The story of "Hogni and Hedinn" is a late and amplified version of the mythological tale given in the "Skáldskaparmál" (or Treatise on Poetic Diction), a translation of which we add in a note.

"Roi the Fool," in spite of its very characteristic North-

ern colouring, is a version of an Eastern story, and is probably adapted directly from some Latin translation of the mediæval Greek Syntipas, the earliest European version of the "Seven Wise Masters," which is also found in the "Thousand and One Nights" under the title of "The King, his Son, and the Seven Wezeers:" at p. 163 of the 3rd vol. of Mr. Lane's translation the reader will find the Arabian version of Roi the Fool.²

The short tale of "Thorstein Staff-smitten" is a kind of hanger-on to the more important story of "the Weapon-firth Men," the people of a district in the North-east of Iceland. Biarni of Hof is the hero of the second generation in this tale: at the fight at Bodvarsdale, mentioned more than once in our story, he met and defeated his cousin, whom he afterwards treated with a generosity and forbearance much of a piece with his dealings with Thorstein Staff-smitten.

² We must note here, in illustration of the wanderings of this story, that it is found only in the ancient Icelandic MS. commonly called the "Flateyjarbók," and in that part of it which was written before 1380: from the manner of its adaptation it would seem that the tale came to Iceland from Denmark. It is to be added, that the "Flateyjarbók" was certainly written at Viðidalstungu (in Iceland) by two clerks, Jón Þorhallson and Magnús Þorðarson, probably chaplains (*heimilis-prestar*) of the lord of the manor, and belonged apparently from the beginning to Jón Hákonarson, who by a charter (*máldagi*) for the church of Viðidalstungu, dated 1394, is proved to have been master of that stead about the time when the MS. was being written.

CHRONOLOGY IN THE STORY OF GUNNLAUG THE WORM-TONGUE

Helga the Fair born	circa 985
Gunnlaug Worm-tongue born	983
Gunnlaug attempts to run away	998
Gunnlaug resides alternately at Burg and Gilsbank for three years	998-1001
Gunnlaug goes to Earl Eric of Hladir	1001
Gunnlaug goes to King Sigtrygg in Ireland, Earl Sigurd in Orkney, and Earl Sigurd of Skarir in Sweden	1002
Gunnlaug goes to King Olaf of Sweden	1003
Raven goes to Iceland	1003
Gunnlaug goes to King Ethelred of England, and re- mains with him	1004-5
Observe: On p. 30 it is stated that in those days Knut the Great ruled in Denmark, &c. This is a mistake on the part of the writer of the Saga, as King Swein lived until A.D. 1014, when Knut succeeded to his throne; but it affects the chronology of the Saga in nowise.	
Gunnlaug sails to Iceland in the autumn	1005
Gunnlaug fights a duel with Raven	1006
Duels forbidden by law	1006
Gunnlaug and Raven go abroad	1006
Gunnlaug remains in Orkney	1007
Raven sojourns in Throndheim	1007
Gunnlaug spends the winter with Earl Eric	1008
Gunnlaug falls, 23 years of age	1008

THE STORY OF GUNNLAUG THE WORM-TONGUE AND RAVEN THE SKALD

EVEN AS ARI THORGILSON THE LEARN-
ED, THE PRIEST, HATH TOLD IT, WHO
WAS THE MAN OF ALL ICELAND MOST
LEARNED IN TALES OF THE LAND'S IN-
HABITING & IN LORE OF TIME AGONE

CHAPTER I. OF THORSTEIN EGILSON & HIS KIN.

THERE was a man called Thorstein, the son of Egil, the son of Skallagrim, the son of Kveldulf the Hersir of Norway. Asgerd was the mother of Thorstein; she was the daughter of Biorn Hold. Thorstein dwelt at Burg in Burgfirth; he was rich of fee, and a great chief, a wise man, meek and of measure in all wise. He was nought of such wondrous growth and strength as his father Egil had been; yet was he a right mighty man, and much beloved of all folk.

Thorstein was goodly to look on, flaxen-haired, and the best-eyed of men; and so say men of lore that many of the kin of the Mere-men, who are come of Egil, have been the goodliest folk; yet, for all that, this kindred have differed much herein, for it is said that some of them have been accounted the most ill-favoured of men: but in that kin have been also many men of great prowess in many wise, such as Kiartan, the son of Olaf Peacock, and Slaying-Bardi, and Skuli, the son of Thorstein. Some have been great bards, too, in that kin, as Biorn, the champion of Hitdale, priest Einar Skulison, Snorri Sturluson, and many others.

Now, Thorstein had to wife Jofrid, the daughter of Gunnar, the son of Hlifar. This Gunnar was the best skilled in weapons, and the lithest of limb of all bonder-folk who have been in Iceland; the second was Gunnar of Lithend; but

Gunnlaug Worm-tongue Steinthor of Ere was the third. Jofrid was eighteen winters old when Thorstein wedded her; she was a widow, for Thorodd, son of Odd of Tongue, had had her to wife aforetime. Their daughter was Hungerd, who was brought up at Thorstein's at Burg. Jofrid was a very stirring woman; she and Thorstein had many children betwixt them, but few of them come into this tale. Skuli was the eldest of their sons, Kollsvein the second, Egil the third.

CHAPTER II. OF THORSTEIN'S DREAM.

ONE summer, it is said, a ship came from over the main into Gufaros. Bergfinn was he hight who was the master thereof, a Northman of kin, rich in goods, and somewhat stricken in years, and a wise man he was withal.

Now, goodman Thorstein rode to the ship, as it was his wont mostly to rule the market, and this he did now. The Eastmen got housed, but Thorstein took the master to himself, for thither he prayed to go. Bergfinn was of few words throughout the winter, but Thorstein treated him well. The Eastman had great joy of dreams.

One day in spring-tide Thorstein asked Bergfinn if he would ride with him up to Hawkfell, where at that time was the Thing-stead of the Burg-firthers; for Thorstein had been told that the walls of his booth had fallen in. The Eastman said he had good will to go, so that day they rode, some three together, from home, and the house-carles of Thorstein withal, till they came up under Hawkfell to a farmstead called Foxholes. There dwelt a man of small wealth called Atli, who was Thorstein's tenant. Thorstein bade him come and work with them, and bring with him hoe and spade. This he did, and when they came to the tofts of the booth, they set to work all of them, and did out the walls.

The weather was hot with sunshine that day, and Thorstein and the Eastman grew heavy; and when they had moved out the walls, those two sat down within the tofts, and Thorstein slept, and fared ill in his sleep. The Eastman sat beside him, and let him have his dream fully out, and

when he awoke he was much wearied. Then the Eastman asked him what he had dreamt, as he had had such an ill time of it in his sleep.

Thorstein's
Dream

Thorstein said, "Nay, dreams betoken nought."

But as they rode homeward in the evening, the Eastman asked him again what he had dreamt.

Thorstein said, "If I tell thee the dream, then shalt thou unriddle it to me, as it verily is."

The Eastman said he would risk it.

Then Thorstein said: "This was my dream; for methought I was at home at Burg, standing outside the men's-door, and I looked up at the house-roof, and on the ridge I saw a swan, goodly and fair, and I thought it was mine own, and deemed it good beyond all things. Then I saw a great eagle sweep down from the mountains, and fly thitherward and alight beside the swan, and chuckle over her lovingly; and methought the swan seemed well content thereat; but I noted that the eagle was black-eyed, and that on him were iron claws: valiant he seemed to me.

"After this I thought I saw another fowl come flying from the south quarter, and he, too, came hither to Burg, and sat down on the house beside the swan, and would fain be fond with her. This also was a mighty eagle.

"But soon I thought that the eagle first-come ruffled up at the coming of the other. Then they fought fiercely and long, and, this I saw that both bled, and such was the end of their play, that each tumbled either way down from the house-roof, and there they lay both dead.

"But the swan sat left alone, drooping much, and sad of semblance.

"Then I saw a fowl fly from the west; that was a falcon, and he sat beside the swan and made fondly towards her, and they flew away both together into one and the same quarter, and therewith I awoke.

"But a dream of no mark this is," he says, "and will in all likelihood betoken gales, that they shall meet in the air from those quarters whence I deemed the fowl flew."

Gunnlaug
Worm-
tongue

The Eastman spake: "I deem it nowise such," saith he.
Thorstein said, "Make of the dream, then, what seemeth
liketh to thee, and let me hear."

Then said the Eastman: "These birds are like to be fetches
of men: but thy wife sickens now, and she will give birth to
a woman-child fair and lovely; and dearly thou wilt love her;
but high-born men shall woo thy daughter, coming from such
quarters as the eagles seemed to fly from, and shall love her
with overweening love, and shall fight about her, and both
lose their lives thereby. And thereafter a third man, from the
quarter whence came the falcon, shall woo her, and to that
man shall she be wedded. Now, I have unravelled thy dream,
and I think things will befall as I have said."

Thorstein answered: "In evil and unfriendly wise is the
dream interpreted, nor do I deem thee fit for the work of un-
riddling dreams."

The Eastman said, "Thou shalt find how it will come to
pass."

But Thorstein estranged himself from the Eastman
thenceforward, and he left that summer, and now he is out
of the tale.

CHAPTER III. OF THE BIRTH AND FOSTERING OF HELGA THE FAIR.

THIS summer Thorstein got ready to ride to the
Thing, and spake to Jofrid his wife before he went
from home. "So is it," he says, "that thou art with
child now, but thy child shall be cast forth if thou bear a wo-
man; but nourished if it be a man."

Now, at this time when all the land was heathen, it was
somewhat the wont of such men as had little wealth, and
were like to have many young children on their hands, to
have them cast forth, but an evil deed it was always deemed
to be.

And now, when Thorstein had said this, Jofrid answers,
"This is a word all unlike thee, such a man as thou art, and

surely to a wealthy man like thee it will not seem good that this should be done.”

Of Helga
the Fair

Thorstein answered: “Thou knowest my mind, and that no good will hap if my will be thwarted.”

So he rode to the Thing; but while he was gone Jofrid gave birth to a woman-child wondrous fair. The women would fain show her to the mother; she said there was little need thereof, but had her shepherd Thorvard called to her, and spake to him:

“Thou shalt take my horse and saddle it, and bring this child west to Herdholt, to Thorgerd, Egil’s daughter, and pray her to nourish it secretly, so that Thorstein may not know thereof. For with such looks of love do I behold this child, that surely I cannot bear to have it cast forth. Here are three marks of silver, have them in reward of thy work; but west there Thorgerd will get thee fare and food over the sea.”

Then Thorvard did her bidding; he rode with the child to Herdholt, and gave it into Thorgerd’s hands, and she had it nourished at a tenant’s of hers who dwelt at Freedmans-stead up in Hvamfirth; but she got fare for Thorvard north in Steingrims-firth, in Shell-creek, and gave him meet outfit for his sea-faring: he went thence abroad, and is now out of the story.

Now when Thorstein came home from the Thing, Jofrid told him that the child had been cast forth according to his word, but that the herdsman had fled away and stolen her horse. Thorstein said she had done well, and got himself another herdsman. So six winters passed, and this matter was nowise wotted of.

Now in those days Thorstein rode to Herdholt, being bidden there as guest of his brother-in-law, Olaf Peacock, the son of Hoskuld, who was then deemed to be the chief highest of worth among all men west there. Good cheer was made Thorstein, as was like to be; and one day at the feast it is said that Thorgerd sat in the high seat talking with her brother Thorstein, while Olaf was talking to other men;

Gunnlaug but on the bench right over against them sat three little
Worm- maidens. Then said Thorgerd,
tongue “How dost thou, brother, like the look of these three
little maidens sitting straight before us?”

“Right well,” he answers, “but one is by far the fairest; she has all the goodliness of Olaf, but the whiteness and the countenance of us, the Mere-men.”

Thorgerd answered: “Surely this is true, brother, wherein thou sayest that she has the fairness and countenance of us Mere-folk, but the goodliness of Olaf Peacock she has not got, for she is not his daughter.”

“How can that be,” says Thorstein, “being thy daughter none the less?”

She answered: “To say sooth, kinsman,” quoth she, “this fair maiden is not my daughter, but thine.”

And therewith she told him all as it had befallen, and prayed him to forgive her and his own wife that trespass.

Thorstein said: “I cannot blame you two for having done this; most things will fall as they are fated, and well have ye covered over my folly: so look I on this maiden that I deem it great good luck to have so fair a child. But now, what is her name?”

“Helga she is called,” says Thorgerd.

“Helga the FAIR,” says Thorstein. “But now shalt thou make her ready to come home with me.”

She did so, and Thorstein was led out with good gifts, and Helga rode with him to his home, and was brought up there with much honour and great love from father and mother and all her kin.

CHAPTER IV. OF GUNNLAUG WORM-TONGUE AND HIS KIN.

NOW at this time there dwelt at Gilsbank, up in White-water-side, Illugi the Black, son of Hallkel, the son of Hrosskel. The mother of Illugi was Thurid Dandle, daughter of Gunnlaug Worm-tongue.

Illugi was the next greatest chief in Burgfirth after Thor- Of Gunn-stein Egilson. He was a man of broad lands and hardy of laug and mood, and wont to do well to his friends; he had to wife In- his kin-gibiorg, the daughter of Asbiorn Hordson, from Ornlfsdale; the mother of Ingibiorg was Thorgerd, the daughter of Midfirth-Skeggi. The children of Illugi and Ingibiorg were many, but few of them have to do with this story. Hermund was one of their sons, and Gunnlaug another; both were hopeful men, and at this time of ripe growth.

It is told of Gunnlaug that he was quick of growth in his early youth, big, and strong; his hair was light red, and very goodly of fashion; he was dark-eyed, somewhat ugly-nosed, yet of lovesome countenance; thin of flank he was, and broad of shoulder, and the best-wrought of men; his whole mind was very masterful; eager was he from his youth up, and in all wise unsparing and hardy; he was a great skald, but somewhat bitter in his rhyming, and therefore was he called Gunnlaug Worm-tongue.

Hermund was the best beloved of the two brothers, and had the mien of a great man.

When Gunnlaug was fifteen winters old he prayed his father for goods to fare abroad withal, and said he had will to travel and see the manners of other folk. Master Illugi was slow to take the matter up, and said he was unlike to be deemed good in the out-lands "when I can scarcely shape thee to my own liking at home."

On a morning but a very little afterwards it happened that Illugi came out early, and saw that his storehouse was opened, and that some sacks of wares, six of them, had been brought out into the road, and therewithal too some pack-gear. Now, as he wondered at this, there came up a man leading four horses, and who should it be but his son Gunnlaug. Then said he:

"I it was who brought out the sacks."

Illugi asked him why he had done so. He said that they should be his faring goods.

Gunnlaug Illugi said: "In nowise shalt thou thwart my will, nor fare
Worm- anywhere sooner than I like!" and in again he swung the
tongue ware-sacks therewith.

Then Gunnlaug rode thence and came in the evening down to Burg, and goodman Thorstein asked him to bide there, and Gunnlaug was fain of that proffer. He told Thorstein how things had gone betwixt him and his father, and Thorstein offered to let him bide there as long as he liked, and for some seasons Gunnlaug abode there, and learned law-craft of Thorstein, and all men accounted well of him.

Now Gunnlaug and Helga would be always at the chess-playing together, and very soon each found favour with the other, as came to be proven well enough afterwards: they were very nigh of an age.

Helga was so fair, that men of lore say that she was the fairest woman of Iceland, then or since; her hair was so plentiful and long that it could cover her all over, and it was as fair as a band of gold; nor was there any so good to choose as Helga the Fair in all Burgfirth, and far and wide elsewhere.

Now one day, as men sat in the hall at Burg, Gunnlaug spake to Thorstein: "One thing in law there is which thou hast not taught me, and that is how to woo me a wife."

Thorstein said, "That is but a small matter," and therewith taught him how to go about it.

Then said Gunnlaug, "Now shalt thou try if I have understood all: I shall take thee by the hand and make as if I were wooing thy daughter Helga."

"I see no need of that," says Thorstein. Gunnlaug, however, groped then and there after his hand, and seizing it said, "Nay, grant me this though."

"Do as thou wilt, then," said Thorstein; "but be it known to all who are hereby that this shall be as if it had been unspoken, nor shall any guile follow herein."

Then Gunnlaug named for himself witnesses, and betrothed Helga to him, and asked thereafter if it would stand good thus. Thorstein said that it was well; and those who were present were mightily pleased at all this.

CHAPTER V. OF RAVEN AND HIS KIN.

Of Raven
& his kin

THERE was a man called Onund, who dwelt in the south at Mossfell : he was the wealthiest of men, and had a priesthood south there about the nesses. He was married, and his wife was called Geirny. She was the daughter of Gnup, son of Mold-Gnup, who settled at Grindwick, in the south country. Their sons were Raven, and Thorarin, and Eindridi ; they were all hopeful men, but Raven was in all wise the first of them. He was a big man and a strong, the sightliest of men and a good skald ; and when he was fully grown he fared between sundry lands, and was well accounted of wherever he came.

Thorod the Sage, the son of Eyvind, then dwelt at Hjalli, south in Olfus, with Skapti his son, who was then the spokesman-at-law in Iceland. The mother of Skapti was Ranveig, daughter of Gnup, the son of Mold-Gnup ; and Skapti and the sons of Onund were sisters' sons. Between these kinsmen was much friendship as well as kinship.

At this time Thorfin, the son of Selthorir, dwelt at Red-Mel, and had seven sons, who were all the hopefulest of men ; and of them were these—Thorgils, Eyjolf, and Thorir ; and they were all the greatest men out there.

But these men who have now been named lived all at one and the same time.

Next to this befell those tidings, the best that ever have befallen here in Iceland, that the whole land became Christian and that all folk cast off the old faith.

CHAPTER VI. HOW HELGA WAS VOWED TO GUNNLAUG, AND OF GUNNLAUG'S FARING ABROAD.

GUNNLAUG WORM-TONGUE was, as is aforesaid, whiles at Burg with Thorstein, whiles with his father Illugi at Gilsbank, three winters together, and was by now eighteen winters old ; and father and son were now much more of a mind.

There was a man called Thorkel the Black ; he was a house-

Gunnlaug Worm-tongue carle of Illugi, and near akin to him, and had been brought up in his house. To him fell an heritage north at As, in Waterdale, and he prayed Gunnlaug to go with him thither. This he did, and so they rode, the two together, to As. There they got the fee; it was given up to them by those who had the keeping of it, mostly because of Gunnlaug's furtherance.

But as they rode from the north they guested at Grims-tongue, at a rich bonder's who dwelt there; but in the morning a herdsman took Gunnlaug's horse, and it had sweated much by then he got it back. Then Gunnlaug smote the herdsman, and stunned him; but the bonder would in no-wise bear this, and claimed boot therefor. Gunnlaug offered to pay him one mark. The bonder thought it too little.

Then Gunnlaug sang:

“Bade I the middling mighty
To have a mark of waves' flame;
Giver of grey seas' glitter,
This gift shalt thou make shift with.
If the elf-sun of the waters
From out of purse thou lettest,
O waster of the worm's bed,
Awaits thee sorrow later.”

So the peace was made as Gunnlaug bade, and in such wise the two rode south.

Now, a little while after, Gunnlaug asked his father a second time for goods for going abroad.

Illugi says, “Now shalt thou have thy will, for thou hast wrought thyself into something better than thou wert.” So Illugi rode hastily from home, and bought for Gunnlaug half a ship which lay in Gufaros, from Audun Festargram—this Audun was he who would not flit abroad the sons of Oswif the Wise, after the slaying of Kiartan Olafson, as is told in the story of the Laxdale-men, which thing though betid later than this.—And when Illugi came home Gunnlaug thanked him well.

Thorkel the Black betook himself to seafaring with Gunnlaug, and their wares were brought to the ship; but Gunnlaug was at Burg while they made her ready, and found more cheer in talk with Helga than in toiling with chapmen.

How
Helga was
vowed to
Gunnlaug

Now one day Thorstein asked Gunnlaug if he would ride to his horses with him up to Longwater-dale. Gunnlaug said he would. So they ride both together till they come to the mountain-dairies of Thorstein, called Thorgils-stead. There were stud-horses of Thorstein, four of them together, all red of hue. There was one horse very goodly, but little tried: this horse Thorstein offered to give to Gunnlaug. He said he was in no need of horses, as he was going away from the country; and so they ride to other stud-horses. There was a grey horse with four mares, and he was the best of horses in Burgfirth. This one, too, Thorstein offered to give Gunnlaug, but he said, "I desire these in no wise more than the others; but why dost thou not bid me what I will take?"

"What is that?" said Thorstein.

"Helga the Fair, thy daughter," says Gunnlaug.

"That rede is not to be settled so hastily," said Thorstein; and therewithal got on other talk. And now they ride homewards down along Longwater.

Then said Gunnlaug, "I must needs know what thou wilt answer me about the wooing."

Thorstein answers: "I need not thy vain talk," says he.

Gunnlaug says, "This is my whole mind, and no vain words."

Thorstein says, "Thou shouldst first know thine own will. Art thou not bound to fare abroad? and yet thou makest as if thou wouldst go marry. Neither art thou an even match for Helga while thou art so unsettled, and therefore this cannot so much as be looked at."

Gunnlaug says, "Where lookest thou for a match for thy daughter, if thou wilt not give her to the son of Illugi the Black; or who are they throughout Burgfirth who are of more note than he?"

Thorstein answered: "I will not play at men-mating,"

Gunnlaug Worm-tongue says he, "but if thou wert such a man as he is, thou wouldst not be turned away."

Gunnlaug said, "To whom wilt thou give thy daughter rather than to me?"

Said Thorstein, "Hereabout are many good men to choose from. Thorfin of Red-Mel hath seven sons, and all of them men of good manners."

Gunnlaug answers, "Neither Onund nor Thorfin are men as good as my father. Nay, thou thyself clearly fallest short of him—or what hast thou to set against his strife with Thorgrim the Priest, the son of Kiallak, and his sons, at Thorsness Thing, where he carried all that was in debate?"

Thorstein answers, "I drave away Steinar, the son of Onund Sioni, which was deemed somewhat of a deed."

Gunnlaug says, "Therein thou wast holpen by thy father Egil; and, to end all, it is for few bonders to cast away my alliance."

Said Thorstein, "Carry thy cowing away to the fellows up yonder at the mountains; for down here, on the Meres, it shall avail thee nought."

Now in the evening they come home; but next morning Gunnlaug rode up to Gilsbank, and prayed his father to ride with him a-wooing out to Burg.

Illugi answered, "Thou art an unsettled man, being bound for faring abroad, but makest now as if thou wouldst busy thyself with wife-wooing; and so much do I know, that this is not to Thorstein's mind."

Gunnlaug answers, "I shall go abroad all the same, nor shall I be well pleased but if thou further this."

So after this Illugi rode with eleven men from home down to Burg, and Thorstein greeted him well. Early in the morning Illugi said to Thorstein, "I would speak to thee."

"Let us go, then, to the top of the Burg, and talk together there," says Thorstein; and so they did, and Gunnlaug went with them.

Then said Illugi, "My kinsman Gunnlaug tells me that

he has begun a talk with thee on his own behalf, praying that he might woo thy daughter Helga; but now I would fain know what is like to come of this matter. His kin is known to thee, and our possessions; from my hand shall be spared neither land nor rule over men, if such things might perchance further matters.”

How
Helga was
vowed to
Gunnlaug

Thorstein said, “Herein alone Gunnlaug pleases me not, that I find him an unsettled man; but if he were of a mind like thine, little would I hang back.”

Illugi said, “It will cut our friendship across if thou gainsayest me and my son an equal match.”

Thorstein answers, “For thy words and our friendship then, Helga shall be vowed, but not betrothed, to Gunnlaug, and shall bide for him three winters: but Gunnlaug shall go abroad and shape himself to the ways of good men; but I shall be free from all these matters if he does not then come back, or if his ways are not to my liking.”

Thereat they parted; Illugi rode home, but Gunnlaug rode to his ship. But when they had wind at will they sailed for the main, and made the northern part of Norway, and sailed landward along Throndheim to Nidaros; there they rode in the harbour, and unshipped their goods.

CHAPTER VII. OF GUNNLAUG IN THE EAST AND THE WEST.

IN those days Earl Eric, the son of Hakon, and his brother Svein, ruled in Norway. Earl Eric abode as then at Hladir, which was left to him by his father, and a mighty lord he was. Skuli, the son of Thorstein, was with the earl at that time, and was one of his court, and well esteemed.

Now they say that Gunnlaug and Audun Festargram, and seven of them together, went up to Hladir to the earl. Gunnlaug was so clad that he had on a grey kirtle and white long-hose; he had a boil on his foot by the instep, and from this oozed blood and matter as he strode on. In this guise he went before the earl with Audun and the rest of them, and greeted him well. The earl knew Audun, and asked him

Gunnlaug Worm-tongue tidings from Iceland. Audun told him what there was toward. Then the earl asked Gunnlaug who he was, and Gunnlaug told him his name and kin. Then the earl said : "Skuli Thorstein's son, what manner of man is this in Iceland?"

"Lord," says he, "give him good welcome, for he is the son of the best man in Iceland, Illugi the Black of Gilsbank, and my foster-brother withal."

The earl asked, "What ails thy foot, Iclander?"

"A boil, lord," said he.

"And yet thou wentest not halt."

Gunnlaug answers, "Why go halt while both legs are long alike?"

Then said one of the earl's men, called Thorir : "He swaggereth hugely, this Iclander ! It would not be amiss to try him a little."

Gunnlaug looked at him and sang :

"A courtman there is
Full evil I wis,
A bad man and black
Belief let him lack."

Then would Thorir seize an axe. The earl spake : "Let it be," says he ; "to such things men should pay no heed. But now, Iclander, how old a man art thou?"

Gunnlaug answers : "I am eighteen winters old as now," says he.

Then says Earl Eric, "My spell is that thou shalt not live eighteen winters more."

Gunnlaug said, somewhat under his breath : "Pray not against me, but for thyself rather."

The earl asked thereat, "What didst thou say, Iclander?"

Gunnlaug answers, "What I thought well befitting, that thou shouldst bid no prayers against me, but pray well for thyself rather."

"What prayers, then?" says the earl.

"That thou mightest not meet thy death after the manner of Earl Hakon, thy father."

The earl turned red as blood, and bade them take the rascal in haste; but Skuli stepped up to the earl, and said, "Do this for my words, lord, and give this man peace, so that he depart at his swiftest."

Gunnlaug
in the East
and the
West

The earl answered, "At his swiftest let him be off then, if he will have peace, and never let him come again within my realm."

Then Skuli went out with Gunnlaug down to the bridges, where there was an England-bound ship ready to put out; therein Skuli got for Gunnlaug a berth, as well as for Thor- kel, his kinsman; but Gunnlaug gave his ship into Audun's ward, and so much of his goods as he did not take with him.

Now sail Gunnlaug and his fellows into the English main, and come at autumntide south to London Bridge, where they hauled ashore their ship.

Now at that time King Ethelred, the son of Edgar, ruled over England, and was a good lord; this winter he sat in London. But in those days there was the same tongue in England as in Norway and Denmark; but the tongues changed when William the Bastard won England, for thenceforward French went current there, for he was of French kin.

Gunnlaug went presently to the king, and greeted him well and worthily. The king asked him from what land he came, and Gunnlaug told all as it was. "But," said he, "I have come to meet thee, lord, for that I have made a song on thee, and I would that it might please thee to hearken to that song." The king said it should be so, and Gunnlaug gave forth the song well and proudly; and this is the burden thereof:

"As God are all folk fearing
The free lord King of England,
Kin of all kings and all folk,
To Ethelred the head bow."

The king thanked him for the song, and gave him as song- reward a scarlet cloak lined with the costliest of furs, and

Gunnlaug golden-broidered down to the hem; and made him his man;
Worm- and Gunnlaug was with him all the winter, and was well
tongue accounted of.

One day, in the morning early, Gunnlaug met three men in a certain street, and Thororm was the name of their leader; he was big and strong, and right evil to deal with. He said, "Northman, lend me some money."

Gunnlaug answered, "That were ill counselled to lend one's money to unknown men."

He said, "I will pay it thee back on a named day."

"Then shall it be risked," says Gunnlaug; and he lent him the fee withal.

But some time afterwards Gunnlaug met the king, and told him of the money-lending. The king answered, "Now hast thou thriven little, for this is the greatest robber and reiver; deal with him in no wise, but I will give thee money as much as thine was."

Gunnlaug said, "Then do we, your men, do after a sorry sort, if, treading sackless folk under foot, we let such fellows as this deal us out our lot. Nay, that shall never be."

Soon after he met Thororm and claimed the fee of him. He said he was not going to pay it.

Then sang Gunnlaug:

"Evil counselled art thou,
Gold from us withholding;
The reddener of the edges,
Pricking on with tricking.
Wot ye what? they called me,
Worm-tongue, yet a youngling;
Nor for nought so hight I;
Now is time to show it!"

"Now I will make an offer good in law," says Gunnlaug; "that thou either pay me my money, or else that thou go on holm with me in three nights' space."

Then laughed the viking, and said, "Before thee none

have come to that, to call me to holm, despite of all the ruin that many a man has had to take at my hands. Well, I am ready to go.”

Gunnlaug
in the East
and the
West

Thereon they parted for that time.

Gunnlaug told the king what had befallen; and he said, “Now, indeed, have things taken a right hopeless turn; for this man’s eyes can dull any weapon. But thou shalt follow my rede; here is a sword I will give thee—with that thou shalt fight, but before the battle show him another.”

Gunnlaug thanked the king well therefor.

Now when they were ready for the holm, Thororm asked what sort of a sword it was that he had. Gunnlaug unsheathed it and showed him, but had a loop round the handle of the king’s sword, and slipped it over his hand; the bearserk looked on the sword, and said, “I fear not that sword.”

But now he dealt a blow on Gunnlaug with his sword, and cut off from him nigh all his shield; Gunnlaug smote in turn with the king’s gift; the bearserk stood shieldless before him, thinking he had the same weapon he had shown him, but Gunnlaug smote him his deathblow then and there.

The king thanked him for his work, and he got much fame therefor, both in England and far and wide elsewhere.

In the spring, when ships sailed from land to land, Gunnlaug prayed King Ethelred for leave to sail somewhither; the king asks what he was about then. Gunnlaug said, “I would fulfil what I have given my word to do,” and sang this stave withal:

“My ways must I be wending
Three kings’ walls to see yet,
And earls twain, as I promised
Erewhile to land-sharers.
Neither will I wend me
Back, the worms’-bed lacking,
By war-lord’s son, the wealth-free,
For work done gift well given.”

“So be it, then, skald,” said the king, and withal he gave

Gunnlaug him a ring that weighed six ounces; "but," said he, "thou
Worm- shalt give me thy word to come back next autumn, for I will
tongue not let thee go altogether, because of thy great prowess."

CHAPTER VIII. OF GUNNLAUG IN IRELAND.

THEREAFTER Gunnlaug sailed from England with chapmen north to Dublin. In those days King Sigtrygg Silky-beard, son of King Olaf Kvaran and Queen Kormlada, ruled over Ireland; and he had then borne sway but a little while. Gunnlaug went before the king, and greeted him well and worthily. The king received him as was meet. Then Gunnlaug said, "I have made a song on thee, and I would fain have silence therefor."

The king answered, "No men have before now come forward with songs for me, and surely will I hearken to thine." Then Gunnlaug brought the song, whereof this is the burden:

"Swaru's steed
Doth Sigtrygg feed."

And this is therein also:

"Praise-worth I can
Well measure in man,
And kings, one by one—
Lo here, Kvaran's son!
Grudgeth the king
Gift of gold ring?
I, singer, know
His wont to bestow.
Let the high king say,
Heard he or this day,
Song drapu-measure
Dearer a treasure."

The king thanked him for the song, and called his treasurer to him, and said, "How shall the song be rewarded?"

"What hast thou will to give, lord?" says he.

“How will it be rewarded if I give him two ships for it?” Gunnlaug
said the king. in Ireland

Then said the treasurer, “This is too much, lord; other kings give in reward of songs good keepsakes, fair swords, or golden rings.”

So the king gave him his own raiment of new scarlet, a gold-embroidered kirtle, and a cloak lined with choice furs, and a gold ring which weighed a mark. Gunnlaug thanked him well.

He dwelt a short time here, and then went thence to the Orkneys.

Then was lord in Orkney, Earl Sigurd, the son of Hlodver: he was friendly to Icelanders. Now Gunnlaug greeted the earl well, and said he had a song to bring him. The earl said he would listen thereto, since he was of such great kin in Iceland.

Then Gunnlaug brought the song; it was a shorter lay, and well done. The earl gave him for lay-reward a broad axe, all inlaid with silver, and bade him abide with him.

Gunnlaug thanked him both for his gift and his offer, but said he was bound east for Sweden; and thereafter he went on board ship with chapmen who sailed to Norway.

In the autumn they came east to King's Cliff, Thorkel, his kinsman, being with him all the time. From King's Cliff they got a guide up to West Gothland, and came upon a cheaping-stead, called Skarir: there ruled an earl called Sigurd, a man stricken in years. Gunnlaug went before him, and told him he had made a song on him; the earl gave a willing ear hereto, and Gunnlaug brought the song, which was a shorter lay.

The earl thanked him, and rewarded the song well, and bade him abide there that winter.

Earl Sigurd had a great Yule-feast in the winter, and on Yule-eve came thither men sent from Earl Eric of Norway, twelve of them together, & brought gifts to Earl Sigurd. The earl made them good cheer, and bade them sit by Gunnlaug through the Yule-tide; and there was great mirth at drinks.

Gunnlaug
Worm-
tongue

Now the Gothlanders said that no earl was greater or of more fame than Earl Sigurd; but the Norwegians thought that Earl Eric was by far the foremost of the two. Hereon would they bandy words, till they both took Gunnlaug to be umpire in the matter.

Then he sang this stave:

“Tell ye, staves of spear-din,
How on sleek-side sea-horse
Oft this earl hath proven
Over-toppling billows;
But Eric, victory’s ash-tree,
Oft hath seen in east-seas
More of high blue billows
Before the bows a-roaring.”

Both sides were content with his finding, but the Norwegians the best. But after Yule-tide those messengers left with gifts of goodly things, which Earl Sigurd sent to Earl Eric.

Now they told Earl Eric of Gunnlaug’s finding: the earl thought that he had shown upright dealing and friendship to him herein, and let out some words, saying that Gunnlaug should have good peace throughout his land. What the earl had said came thereafter to the ears of Gunnlaug.

But now Earl Sigurd gave Gunnlaug a guide east to Tenthland, in Sweden, as he had asked.

CHAPTER IX. OF THE QUARREL BETWEEN GUNNLAUG AND RAVEN BEFORE THE SWEDISH KING.

IN those days King Olaf the Swede, son of King Eric the Victorious, and Sigrid the High-counselled, daughter of Skogul Tosti, ruled over Sweden. He was a mighty king and renowned, and full fain of fame.

Gunnlaug came to Upsala towards the time of the Thing of the Swedes in spring-tide; and when he got to see the

king, he greeted him. The king took his greeting well, and asked who he was. He said he was an Iceland-man.

Gunnlaug
& Raven's
Quarrel

Then the king called out: "Raven," says he, "what man is he in Iceland?"

Then one stood up from the lower bench, a big man and a stalwart, and stepped up before the king, and spake: "Lord," says he, "he is of good kin, and himself the most stalwart of men."

"Let him go, then, and sit beside thee," said the king.

Then Gunnlaug said, "I have a song to set forth before thee, king, and I would fain have peace while thou hearkenest thereto."

"Go ye first, and sit ye down," says the king, "for there is no leisure now to sit listening to songs."

So they did as he bade them.

Now Gunnlaug and Raven fell a-talking together, and each told each of his travels. Raven said that he had gone the summer before from Iceland to Norway, and had come east to Sweden in the forepart of winter. They soon got friendly together.

But one day, when the Thing was over, they were both before the king, Gunnlaug and Raven.

Then spake Gunnlaug, "Now, lord, I would that thou shouldst hear the song."

"That I may do now," said the king.

"My song too will I set forth now," says Raven.

"Thou mayst do so," said the king.

Then Gunnlaug said, "I will set forth mine first if thou wilt have it so, king."

"Nay," said Raven, "it behoveth me to be first, lord, for I myself came first to thee."

"Whereto came our fathers forth, so that my father was the little boat towed behind? Whereto, but nowhere?" says Gunnlaug. "And in likewise shall it be with us."

Raven answered, "Let us be courteous enough not to make this a matter of bandying of words. Let the king rule here."

Gunnlaug The king said, "Let Gunnlaug set forth his song first, for
Worm- he will not be at peace till he has his will."
tongue

Then Gunnlaug set forth the song which he had made to King Olaf, and when it was at an end the king spake. "Raven," says he, "how is the song done?"

"Right well," he answered; "it is a song full of big words and little beauty; a somewhat rugged song, as is Gunnlaug's own mood."

"Well, Raven, thy song," said the king.

Raven gave it forth, and when it was done the king said, "How is this song made, Gunnlaug?"

"Well it is, lord," he said; "this is a pretty song, as is Raven himself to behold, and delicate of countenance. But why didst thou make a short song on the king, Raven? Didst thou perchance deem him unworthy of a long one?"

Raven answered, "Let us not talk longer on this; matters will be taken up again, though it be later."

And thereat they parted.

Soon after Raven became a man of King Olaf's, and asked him leave to go away. This the king granted him. And when Raven was ready to go, he spake to Gunnlaug, and said, "Now shall our friendship be ended, for that thou must needs shame me here before great men; but in time to come I shall cast on thee no less shame than thou hadst will to cast on me here."

Gunnlaug answers: "Thy threats grieve me nought. No-where are we likely to come where I shall be thought less worthy than thou."

King Olaf gave to Raven good gifts at parting, and thereafter he went away.

CHAPTER X. HOW RAVEN CAME HOME TO ICELAND, AND ASKED FOR HELGA TO WIFE.

NOW this spring Raven came from the east to Throndheim, and fitted out his ship, and sailed in the summer to Iceland. He brought his ship to Leiruvag, below the Heath, and his friends and kinsmen were right fain of him. That winter he was at home with his father, but the

summer after he met at the Althing his kinsman, Skapti the law-man. Raven asks for

Then said Raven to him, "Thine aid would I have to go a-wooing to Thorstein Egilson, to bid Helga his daughter." Helga to wife

Skapti answered, "But is she not already vowed to Gunnlaug Worm-tongue?"

Said Raven, "Is not the appointed time of waiting between them passed by? And far too wanton is he withal, that he should hold or heed it aught."

"Let us then do as thou wouldst," said Skapti.

Thereafter they went with many men to the booth of Thorstein Egilson, and he greeted them well.

Then Skapti spoke: "Raven, my kinsman, is minded to woo thy daughter Helga. Thou knowest well his blood, his wealth, and his good manners, his many mighty kinsmen and friends."

Thorstein said, "She is already the vowed maiden of Gunnlaug, and with him shall I hold all words spoken."

Skapti said, "Are not the three winters worn now that were named between you?"

"Yes," said Thorstein, "but the summer is not yet worn, and he may still come out this summer."

Then Skapti said, "But if he cometh not this summer, what hope may we have of the matter then?"

Thorstein answered, "We are like to come here next summer, and then may we see what may wisely be done, but it will not do to speak hereof longer as at this time."

Thereon they parted. And men rode home from the Althing. But this talk of Raven's wooing of Helga was nought hidden.

That summer Gunnlaug came not out.

The next summer, at the Althing, Skapti and his folk pushed the wooing eagerly, and said that Thorstein was free as to all matters with Gunnlaug.

Thorstein answered, "I have few daughters to see to, and fain am I that they should not be the cause of strife to any man. Now I will first see Illugi the Black." And so he did.

Gunnlaug And when they met, he said to Illugi, "Dost thou not
Worm- think that I am free from all troth with thy son Gunnlaug?"
tongue Illugi said, "Surely, if thou wilt it. Little can I say here-
in, as I do not know clearly what Gunnlaug is about."

Then Thorstein went to Skapti, and a bargain was struck that the wedding should be at Burg, about winter-nights, if Gunnlaug did not come out that summer; but that Thorstein should be free from all troth with Raven if Gunnlaug should come and fetch his bride.

After this men ride home from the Thing, and Gunnlaug's coming was long drawn out. But Helga thought evilly of all these redds.

CHAPTER XI. OF HOW GUNNLAUG MUST NEEDS ABIDE AWAY FROM ICELAND.

NOW it is to be told of Gunnlaug that he went from Sweden the same summer that Raven went to Iceland, and good gifts he had from King Olaf at parting.

King Ethelred welcomed Gunnlaug worthily, and that winter he was with the king, and was held in great honour.

In those days Knut the Great, son of Svein, ruled Denmark, and had new-taken his father's heritage, and he vowed ever to wage war on England, for that his father had won a great realm there before he died west in that same land.

And at that time there was a great army of Danish men west there, whose chief was Heming, the son of Earl Strut-Harald, and brother to Earl Sigvaldi, and he held for King Knut that land that Svein had won.

Now in the spring Gunnlaug asked the king for leave to go away, but he said, "It ill beseems that thou, my man, shouldst go away now, when all bodes such mighty war in the land."

Gunnlaug said, "Thou shalt rule, lord; but give me leave next summer to depart, if the Danes come not."

The king answered, "Then we shall see."

Now this summer went by, and the next winter, but no Danes came; and after midsummer Gunnlaug got his leave

to depart from the king, and went thence east to Norway, and Gunnlaug found Earl Eric in Thrandheim, at Hladir, and the earl abides greeted him well, and bade him abide with him. Gunnlaug away from thanked him for his offer, but said he would first go out to Iceland to look to his promised maiden.

The earl said, "Now all ships bound for Iceland have sailed."

Then said one of the court: "Here lay, yesterday, Hallfred Troublous-Skald, out under Agdaness."

The earl answered, "That may be well; he sailed hence five nights ago."

Then Earl Eric had Gunnlaug rowed out to Hallfred, who greeted him with joy; and forthwith a fair wind bore them from land, and they were right merry.

This was late in the summer: but now Hallfred said to Gunnlaug: "Hast thou heard of how Raven, the son of Onund, is wooing Helga the Fair?"

Gunnlaug said he had heard thereof, but dimly. Hallfred tells him all he knew of it, and therewith, too, that it was the talk of many men that Raven was in nowise less brave a man than Gunnlaug.

Then Gunnlaug sang this stave:

"Light the weather wafteth;
But if this east wind drifted
Week-long, wild upon us,
Little were I recking;
More this word I mind of
Me with Raven mated,
Than gain for me the gold-foe
Of days to make me grey-haired."

Then Hallfred said, "Well, fellow, mayst thou fare better in thy strife with Raven than I did in mine. I brought my ship some winters ago into Leiruvag, and had to pay a half-mark in silver to a house-carle of Raven's, but I held it back from him. So Raven rode at us with sixty men, and cut the moorings of the ship, and she was driven up on the shallows, and

Gunnlaug we were bound for a wreck. Then I had to give selfdoom to
Worm- Raven, and a whole mark I had to pay; and that is the tale of
tongue my dealings with him."

Then they two talked together alone of Helga the Fair,
and Gunnlaug praised her much for her goodliness; and
Gunnlaug sang:

"He who brand of battle
Beareth over-wary,
Never love shall let him
Hold the linen-folded;
For we when we were younger
In many a way were playing
On the outward nesses
From golden land outstanding."

"Well sung!" said Hallfred.

CHAP. XII. OF GUNNLAUG'S LANDING, AND HOW HE FOUND HELGA WEDDED TO RAVEN.

THEY made land north by Fox-Plain in Hraunhaven,
half a month before winter, and there unshipped their
goods. Now there was a man called Thord, a bonder's
son of the Plain, there. He fell to wrestling with the chap-
men, and they mostly got worsted at his hands.

Then a wrestling was settled between him and Gunnlaug.
The night before Thord made vows to Thor for the victory;
but the next day, when they met, they fell to wrestling. Then
Gunnlaug tripped both feet from under Thord, and gave him
a great fall; but the foot that Gunnlaug stood on was put out
of joint, and Gunnlaug fell together with Thord.

Then said Thord: "Maybe that other things go no better
for thee."

"What then?" says Gunnlaug.

"Thy dealings with Raven, if he wed Helga the Fair at
winter-nights. I was anigh at the Thing when that was settled
last summer."

Gunnlaug answered naught thereto.

Now the foot was swathed, and put into joint again, and it swelled mightily; but he and Hallfred rode twelve in company till they come to Gilsbank, in Burgfirth, the very Saturday night when folk sat at the wedding at Burg. Illugi was fain of his son Gunnlaug and his fellows; but Gunnlaug said he would ride then and there down to Burg. Illugi said it was not wise to do so, and to all but Gunnlaug that seemed good. But Gunnlaug was then unfit to walk, because of his foot, though he would not let that be seen. Therefore there was no faring to Burg.

Gunn-
laug's
Landing

On the morrow Hallfred rode to Hreda-water, in North-water dale, where Galti, his brother and a brisk man, managed their matters.

CHAPTER XIII. OF THE WINTER-WEDDING AT SKANEY, AND HOW GUNNLAUG GAVE THE KING'S CLOAK TO HELGA.

TELLS the tale of Raven, that he sat at his wedding-feast at Burg, and it was the talk of most men that the bride was but drooping; for true is the saw that saith, "Long we remember what youth gained us," and even so it was with her now.

But this new thing befell at the feast, that Hungerd, the daughter of Thorod and Jofrid, was wooed by a man named Sverting, the son of Hafr-Biorn, the son of Mold-Gnup, and the wedding was to come off that winter after Yule, at Skaney, where dwelt Thorkel, a kinsman of Hungerd, and son of Torfi Valbrandsson; and the mother of Torfi was Thorod-da, the sister of Odd of the Tongue.

Now Raven went home to Mossfell with Helga his wife. When they had been there a little while, one morning early before they rose up, Helga was awake, but Raven slept, and fared ill in his sleep. And when he woke Helga asked him what he had dreamt. Then Raven sang:

Gunnlaug
Worm-
tongue

“In thine arms, so dreamed I,
Hewn was I, gold island!
Bride, in blood I bled there,
Bed of thine was reddened.
Never more then mightst thou,
Mead-bowls’ pourer speedy,
Bind my gashes bloody—
Lind-leek-bough thou lik’st it.”

Helga spake: “Never shall I weep therefor,” quoth she; “ye have evilly beguiled me, and Gunnlaug has surely come out.” And therewith she wept much.

But, a little after, Gunnlaug’s coming was bruited about, and Helga became so hard with Raven, that he could not keep her at home at Mossfell; so that back they had to go to Burg, and Raven got small share of her company.

Now men get ready for the winter-wedding. Thorkel of Skaney bade Illugi the Black and his sons. But when master Illugi got ready, Gunnlaug sat in the hall, and stirred not to go. Illugi went up to him and said, “Why dost thou not get ready, kinsman?”

Gunnlaug answered, “I have no mind to go.”

Says Illugi, “Nay, but certes thou shalt go, kinsman,” says he; “and cast thou not grief over thee by yearning for one woman. Make as if thou knewest nought of it, for women thou wilt never lack.”

Now Gunnlaug did as his father bade him; so they came to the wedding, and Illugi and his sons were set down in the high seat; but Thorstein Egilson, and Raven his son-in-law, and the bridegroom’s following, were set in the other high seat, over against Illugi.

The women sat on the dais, and Helga the Fair sat next to the bride. Oft she turned her eyes on Gunnlaug, thereby proving the saw, “Eyes will bewray if maid love man.”

Gunnlaug was well arrayed, and had on him that goodly raiment that King Sigtrygg had given him; and now he was thought far above all other men, because of many things, both strength, and goodliness, and growth.

There was little mirth among folk at this wedding. But The
on the day when all men were making ready to go away the Winter-
women stood up and got ready to go home. Then went Gunn- wedding
laug to talk to Helga, and long they talked together: but at Skaney
Gunnlaug sang:

“Light-heart lived the Worm-tongue
All day long no longer
In mountain-home, since Helga
Had name of wife of Raven;
Nought foresaw thy father,
Hardener white of fight-thaw,
What my words should come to.
—The maid to gold was wedded.”

And again he sang:

“Worst reward I owe them,
Father thine, O wine-may,
And mother, that they made thee
So fair beneath thy maid-gear;
For thou, sweet field of sea-flame,
All joy hast slain within me.—
Lo, here, take it, loveliest
E’er made of lord and lady!”

And therewith Gunnlaug gave Helga the cloak, Ethel-
red’s-gift, which was the fairest of things, and she thanked
him well for the gift.

Then Gunnlaug went out, and by that time riding-horses
had been brought home and saddled, and among them were
many very good ones; and they were all tied up in the road.
Gunnlaug leaps on to a horse, and rides a hand-gallop along
the homefield up to a place where Raven happened to stand
just before him; and Raven had to draw out of his way. Then
Gunnlaug said:

“No need to slink aback, Raven, for I threaten thee nought
as at this time; but thou knowest forsooth, what thou hast
earned.”

Gunnlaug
Worm-
tongue

Raven answered and sang:

“God of wound-flames’ glitter,
Glorier of fight-goddess,
Must we fall a-fighting
For fairest kirtle-bearer?
Death-staff, many such-like
Fair as she is are there
In south-lands o’er the sea-floods.
Sooth saith he who knoweth.”

“Maybe there are many such, but they do not seem so to me,” said Gunnlaug.

Therewith Illugi and Thorstein ran up to them and would not have them fight.

Then Gunnlaug sang:

“The fair-hued golden goddess
For gold to Raven sold they,
(Raven my match as men say)
While the mighty isle-king,
Ethelred, in England
From eastward way delayed me,
Wherefore to gold-waster
Waneth tongue’s speech-hunger.”

Hereafter both rode home, and all was quiet and tidingless that winter through; but Raven had nought of Helga’s fellowship after her meeting with Gunnlaug.

CHAPTER XIV. OF THE HOLMGANG AT THE ALTHING.

NOW in summer men ride a very many to the Althing: Illugi the Black, and his sons with him, Gunnlaug and Hermund; Thorstein Egilson and Kolsvein his son; Onund, of Mossfell, and his sons all, and Sverting, Hafr-Biorn’s son. Skapti yet held the spokesmanship-at-law.

One day at the Thing, as men went thronging to the Hill

of Laws, and when the matters of the law were done there, Of the
then Gunnlaug craved silence, and said: holmgang
"Is Raven, the son of Onund, here?" at the
He said he was. Althing

Then spake Gunnlaug, "Thou well knowest that thou hast
got to wife my avowed bride, and thus hast thou made thy-
self my foe. Now for this I bid thee to holm here at the Thing,
in the holm of the Axe-water, when three nights are gone by."

Raven answers, "This is well bidden, as was to be looked
for of thee, and for this I am ready, whenever thou wilt it."

Now the kin of each deemed this a very ill thing. But, at
that time it was lawful for him who thought himself wronged
by another to call him to fight on the holm.

So when three nights had gone by they got ready for the
holmgang, and Illugi the Black followed his son thither with
a great following. But Skapti, the lawman, followed Raven,
and his father and other kinsmen of his.

Now before Gunnlaug went upon the holm he sang:

"Out to isle of eel-field
Dight am I to hie me:
Give, O God, thy singer
With glaive to end the striving.
Here shall I the head cleave
Of Helga's love's devourer,
At last my bright sword bringeth
Sundering of head and body."

Then Raven answered and sang:

"Thou, singer, knowest not surely
Which of us twain shall gain it;
With edge for leg-swathe eager,
Here are the wound-scythes bare now.
In whatso-wise we wound us,
The tidings from the Thing here,
And fame of thanes' fair doings,
The fair young maid shall hear it."

Gunnlaug
Worm-
tongue

Hermund held shield for his brother, Gunnlaug; but Sverting, Hafr-Biorn's son, was Raven's shield-bearer. Who-so should be wounded was to ransom himself from the holm with three marks of silver.

Now, Raven's part it was to deal the first blow, as he was the challenged man. He hewed at the upper part of Gunnlaug's shield, and the sword brake asunder just beneath the hilt, with so great might he smote; but the point of the sword flew up from the shield and struck Gunnlaug's cheek, whereby he got just grazed; with that their fathers ran in between them, and many other men.

"Now," said Gunnlaug, "I call Raven overcome, as he is weaponless."

"But I say that thou art vanquished, since thou art wounded," said Raven.

Now, Gunnlaug was nigh mad, and very wrathful, and said it was not tried out yet.

Illugi, his father, said they should try no more for that time.

Gunnlaug said, "Beyond all things I desire that I might in such wise meet Raven again, that thou, father, wert not anigh to part us."

And thereat they parted for that time, and all men went back to their booths.

But on the second day after this it was made law in the law-court that, henceforth, all holmgangs should be forbidden; and this was done by the counsel of all the wisest men that were at the Thing; and there, indeed were all the men of most counsel in all the land. And this was the last holmgang fought in Iceland, this, wherein Gunnlaug and Raven fought.

But this Thing was the third most thronged Thing that has been held in Iceland; the first was after Njal's burning, the second after the Heath-slaughters.

Now, one morning, as the brothers Hermund and Gunnlaug went to Axe-water to wash, on the other side went many women towards the river, and in that company was Helga the Fair. Then said Hermund:

"Dost thou see thy friend Helga there on the other side of the river?" Of the holmgang

"Surely, I see her," says Gunnlaug, and withal he sang: at the Althing

"Born was she for men's bickering:
Sore bale hath wrought the war-stem,
And I yearned ever madly
To hold that oak-tree golden.
To me then, me destroyer
Of swan-mead's flame, unneedful
This looking on the dark-eyed,
This golden land's beholding."

Therewith they crossed the river, and Helga and Gunnlaug spake awhile together, and as the brothers crossed the river eastward back again, Helga stood and gazed long after Gunnlaug.

Then Gunnlaug looked back and sang:

"Moon of linen-lapped one,
Leek-sea-bearing goddess,
Hawk-keen out of heaven
Shone all bright upon me;
But that eyelid's moonbeam
Of gold-necklaced goddess
Her hath all undoing
Wrought, and me made nought of."

CHAPTER XV. HOW GUNNLAUG AND RAVEN AGREED TO GO EAST TO NORWAY, TO TRY THE MATTER AGAIN.

NOW after these things were gone by men rode home from the Thing, and Gunnlaug dwelt at home at Gilsbank.

On a morning when he awoke all men had risen up, but he alone still lay abed; he lay in a shut-bed behind the seats. Now into the hall came twelve men, all full armed, and who

Gunnlaug should be there but Raven, Onund's son; Gunnlaug sprang
Worm- up forthwith, and got to his weapons.
tongue

But Raven spake, "Thou art in risk of no hurt this time," quoth he, "but my errand hither is what thou shalt now hear: Thou didst call me to a holmgang last summer at the Althing, and thou didst not deem matters to be fairly tried therein; now I will offer thee this, that we both fare away from Iceland, and go abroad next summer, and go on holm in Norway, for there our kinsmen are not like to stand in our way."

Gunnlaug answered: "Hail to thy words, stoutest of men! this thine offer I take gladly; and here, Raven, mayest thou have cheer as good as thou mayest desire."

"It is well offered," said Raven, "but this time we shall first have to ride away." Thereon they parted.

Now the kinsmen of both sore misliked them of this, but could in no wise undo it, because of the wrath of Gunnlaug and Raven; and, after all, that must betide that drew towards.

Now it is to be said of Raven that he fitted out his ship in Leiruvag; two men are named that went with him, sisters' sons of his father Onund, one hight Grim, the other Olaf, doughty men both. All the kinsmen of Raven thought it great scathe when he went away, but he said he had challenged Gunnlaug to the holmgang because he could have no joy soever of Helga; and he said, withal, that one must fall before the other.

So Raven put to sea, when he had wind at will, and brought his ship to Throndheim, and was there that winter and heard nought of Gunnlaug that winter through; there he abode him the summer following: and still another winter was he in Throndheim, at a place called Lifangr.

Gunnlaug Worm-tongue took ship with Hallfred Troublous-Skald, in the north at The Plain; they were very late ready for sea.

They sailed into the main when they had a fair wind, and made Orkney a little before the winter. Earl Sigurd Lodver-son was still lord over the isles, and Gunnlaug went to him

and abode there that winter, and the earl held him of much account. Gunnlaug & Raven

In the spring the earl would go on warfare, and Gunnlaug made ready to go with him ; and that summer they harried wide about the South-isles and Scotland's firths, and had many fights, and Gunnlaug always showed himself the bravest and doughtiest of fellows, and the hardiest of men wherever they came. go East to Norway

Earl Sigurd went back home early in the summer, but Gunnlaug took ship with chapmen, sailing for Norway, and he and Earl Sigurd parted in great friendship.

Gunnlaug fared north to Thrandheim, to Hladir, to see Earl Eric, and dwelt there through the early winter ; the earl welcomed him gladly, and made offer to Gunnlaug to stay with him, and Gunnlaug agreed thereto.

The earl had heard already how all had befallen between Gunnlaug and Raven, and he told Gunnlaug that he laid ban on their fighting within his realm ; Gunnlaug said the earl should be free to have his will herein.

So Gunnlaug abode there the winter through, ever heavy of mood.

CHAP. XVI. HOW THE TWO FOES MET AND FOUGHT AT DINGNESS.

BUT on a day in spring Gunnlaug was walking abroad, and his kinsman Thorkel with him ; they walked away from the town, till on the meads before them they saw a ring of men, and in that ring were two men with weapons fencing ; but one was named Raven, the other Gunnlaug, while they who stood by said that Icelanders smote light, and were slow to remember their words.

Gunnlaug saw the great mocking hereunder, and much jeering was brought into the play ; and withal he went away silent.

So a little while after he said to the earl that he had no mind to bear any longer the jeers and mocks of his courtiers

Gunnlaug Worm-tongue about his dealings with Raven, and therewith he prayed the earl to give him a guide to Lifangr : now before this the earl had been told that Raven had left Lifangr and gone east to Sweden ; therefore, he granted Gunnlaug leave to go, and gave him two guides for the journey.

Now Gunnlaug went from Hladir with six men to Lifangr ; and, on the morning of the very day whereas Gunnlaug came in in the evening, Raven had left Lifangr with four men. Thence Gunnlaug went to Vera-dale, and came always in the evening to where Raven had been the night before.

So Gunnlaug went on till he came to the uppermost farm in the valley, called Sula, wherefrom had Raven fared in the morning ; there he stayed not his journey, but kept on his way through the night.

Then in the morning at sun-rise they saw one another. Raven had got to a place where were two waters, and between them flat meads, and they are called Gleipni's meads : but into one water stretched a little ness called Dingness. There on the ness Raven and his fellows, five together, took their stand. With Raven were his kinsmen, Grim and Olaf.

Now when they met, Gunnlaug said, "It is well that we have found one another."

Raven said that he had nought to quarrel with therein ; "But now," says he, "thou mayest choose as thou wilt, either that we fight alone together, or that we fight all of us man to man."

Gunnlaug said that either way seemed good to him.

Then spake Raven's kinsmen, Grim and Olaf, and said that they would little like to stand by and look on the fight, and in like wise spake Thorkel the Black, the kinsman of Gunnlaug.

Then said Gunnlaug to the earl's guides, "Ye shall sit by and aid neither side, and be here to tell of our meeting ;" and so they did.

So they set on, and fought dauntlessly, all of them. Grim and Olaf went both against Gunnlaug alone, and so closed

their dealings with him that Gunnlaug slew them both and got no wound. This proves Thord Kolbeinson in a song that he made on Gunnlaug the Worm-tongue :

Gunnlaug
& Raven
fight at
Dingness

“Grim and Olaf, great-hearts
In Gondul’s din, with thin sword
First did Gunnlaug fell there
Ere at Raven fared he ;
Bold, with blood be-drifted
Bane of three the thane was ;
War-lord of the wave-horse
Wrought for men folks’ slaughter.”

Meanwhile Raven and Thorkel the Black, Gunnlaug’s kinsman, fought until Thorkel fell before Raven and lost his life ; and so at last all their fellowship fell. Then they two alone fought together with fierce onsets and mighty strokes, which they dealt each the other, falling on furiously without stop or stay.

Gunnlaug had the sword Ethelred’s-gift, and that was the best of weapons. At last Gunnlaug dealt a mighty blow at Raven, and cut his leg from under him ; but none the more did Raven fall, but swung round up to a tree-stem, whereat he steadied the stump.

Then said Gunnlaug, “Now thou art no more meet for battle, nor will I fight with thee any longer, a maimed man.”

Raven answered : “So it is,” said he, “that my lot is now all the worser lot, but it were well with me yet, might I but drink somewhat.”

Gunnlaug said, “Bewray me not if I bring thee water in my helm.”

“I will not bewray thee,” said Raven.

Then went Gunnlaug to a brook and fetched water in his helm, and brought it to Raven ; but Raven stretched forth his left hand to take it, but with his right hand drave his sword into Gunnlaug’s head, and that was a mighty great wound.

Gunnlaug Then Gunnlaug said, "Evilly hast thou beguiled me, and
Worm- done traitorously wherein I trusted thee."
tongue Raven answers, "Thou sayest sooth, but this brought

me to it, that I begrudged thee to lie in the bosom of
Helga the Fair."

Thereat they fought on, recking of nought ; but the end
of it was that Gunnlaug overcame Raven, and there Raven
lost his life.

Then the earl's guides came forward and bound the head-
wound of Gunnlaug, and in meanwhile he sat and sang :

"O thou sword-storm stirrer,
Raven, stem of battle
Famous, fared against me
Fiercely in the spear din.
Many a flight of metal
Was borne on me this morning,
By the spear-walls' builder,
Ring-bearer, on hard Dingness."

After that they buried the dead, and got Gunnlaug on to
his horse thereafter, and brought him right down to Lifangr.
There he lay three nights, and got all his rites of a priest,
and died thereafter, and was buried at the church there.

All men thought it great scathe of both of these men,
Gunnlaug and Raven, amid such deeds as they died.

CHAPTER XVII. THE NEWS OF THE FIGHT BROUGHT TO ICELAND.

NOW this summer, before these tidings were brought
out hither to Iceland, Illugi the Black, being at home
at Gilsbank, dreamed a dream : he thought that
Gunnlaug came to him in his sleep, all bloody, and he sang
in the dream this stave before him ; and Illugi remembered
the song when he woke, and sang it before others :

“Knew I of the hewing
Of Raven’s hilt-finned steel-fish
Byrny-shearing—sword-edge
Sharp clave leg of Raven.—
Of warm wounds drank the eagle,
When the war-rod slender,
Cleaver of the corpses,
Clave the head of Gunnlaug.”

News of
the fight
brought
to Iceland

This portent befel south at Mossfell, the selfsame night,
that Onund dreamed how Raven came to him, covered all
over with blood, and sang :

“Red is the sword, but I now
Am undone by Sword-Odin.
’Gainst shields beyond the sea-flood
The ruin of shields was wielded.
Methinks the blood-fowl blood-stained
In blood o’er men’s heads stood there,
The wound-erne yet wound-eager
Trod over wounded bodies.”

Now the second summer after this, Illugi the Black spoke
at the Althing from the Hill of Laws, and said,

“Wherewith wilt thou make atonement to me for my
son, whom Raven, thy son, beguiled in his troth?”

Onund answers, “Be it far from me to atone for him, so
sorely as their meeting hath wounded me. Yet will I not ask
atonement of thee for my son.”

“Then shall my wrath come home to some of thy kin,”
says Illugi. And withal after the Thing was Illugi at most
times very sad.

Tells the tale how this autumn Illugi rode from Gilsbank
with thirty men, and came to Mossfell early in the morning.
Then Onund got into the church with his sons, and took
sanctuary; but Illugi caught two of his kin, one called Biorn
and the other Thorgrim, and had Biorn slain, but the feet

Gunnlaug smitten from Thorgrim. And thereafter Illugi rode home,
Worm- and there was no righting of this for Onund.
tongue

Hermund, Illugi's son, had little joy after the death of Gunnlaug his brother, and deemed he was none the more avenged even though this had been wrought.

Now there was a man called Raven, brother's son to Onund of Mossfell; he was a great seafarer, and had a ship that lay up in Ramfirth: and in the spring Hermund Illugi-son rode from home alone north over Holt-beacon Heath, even to Ramfirth, and out as far as Board-ere to the ship of the chapmen. The chapmen were then nearly ready for sea; Raven, the ship-master, was on shore, and many men with him; Hermund rode up to him, and thrust him through with his spear, and rode away forthwith: but all Raven's men were bewildered at seeing Hermund.

No atonement came for this slaying, and therewith ended the dealings of Illugi the Black and Onund of Mossfell.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE DEATH OF HELGA THE FAIR.

AS time went on, Thorstein Egilson married his daughter Helga to a man called Thorkel, son of Hallkel, who lived west in Hraundale. Helga went to his house with him, but loved him little, for she cannot cease to think of Gunnlaug, though he be dead. Yet was Thorkel a doughty man, and wealthy of goods, and a good skald.

They had children together not a few, one of them was called Thorarin, another Thorstein, and yet more they had.

But Helga's chief joy was to pluck at the threads of that cloak, Gunnlaug's-gift, and she would be evergazing at it.

But on a time there came a great sickness to the house of Thorkel and Helga, and many were bed-ridden for a long time. Helga also fell sick, and yet she could not keep abed.

So one Saturday evening Helga sat in the fire-hall, and leaned her head upon her husband's knees, and had the cloak Gunnlaug's-gift sent for; and when the cloak came to her she

sat up and plucked at it, and gazed thereon awhile, and then The
sank back upon her husband's bosom, and was dead. Then Death of
Thorkel sang this: Helga

“Dead in mine arms she droopeth,
My dear one, gold-rings' bearer,
For God hath changed the life-days
Of this Lady of the linen.
Weary pain hath pined her,
But unto me, the seeker
Of hoard of fishes' highway,
Abiding here is wearier.”

Helga was buried in the church there, but Thorkel dwelt
yet at Hraundale: but a great matter seemed the death of
Helga to all, as was to be looked for.

AND HERE ENDETH THE STORY.

THE STORY OF FRITHIOF THE BOLD

CHAPTER I. OF KING BELI AND THORSTEIN VIKINGSON AND THEIR CHILDREN.

THUS beginneth the tale, telling how that King Beli ruled over Sogn-land; three children had he, whereof Helgi was his first son, and Halfdan his second, but Ingibjorg his daughter. Ingibjorg was fair of face and wise of mind, and she was ever accounted the foremost of the king's children.

Now a certain strand went west of the firth, and a great stead was thereon, which was called Baldur's Meads; a Place of Peace was there, and a great temple, and round about it a great garth of pales: many gods were there, but amidst them all was Baldur held of most account. So jealous were the heathen men of this stead, that they would have no hurt done therein to man nor beast, nor might any man have dealings with a woman there.

Sowstrand was the name of that stead whereas the king dwelt; but on the other side the firth was an abode named Foreness, where dwelt a man called Thorstein, the son of Viking; and his stead was over against the king's dwelling.

Thorstein had a son by his wife called Frithiof: he was the tallest and strongest of men, and more furnished of all prowess than any other man, even from his youth up. Frithiof the Bold was he called, and so well beloved was he, that all prayed for good things for him.

Now the king's children were but young when their mother died; but a goodman of Sogn, named Hilding, prayed to have the king's daughter to foster: so there was she reared well and heedfully: and she was called Ingibjorg the Fair. Frithiof also was fostered of goodman Hilding, wherefore was he foster-brother to the king's daughter, and they two were peerless among children.

Now King Beli's chattels began to ebb fast away from his hands, for he was grown old.

Thorstein had ruled over the third part of the realm, and in him lay the king's greatest strength.

Every third year Thorstein feasted the king at exceeding great cost, and the king feasted Thorstein the two years between. Of King Beli and Thorstein

Helgi, Beli's son, from his youth up turned much to blood-offering: neither were those brethren well-beloved. Vikingson

Thorstein had a ship called Ellidi, which pulled fifteen oars on either board; it ran up high stem and stern, and was strong built like an ocean-going ship, and its bulwarks were clamped with iron.

So strong was Frithiof that he pulled the two bow oars of Ellidi; but either oar was thirteen ells long, and two men pulled every oar elsewhere.

Frithiof was deemed peerless amid the young men of that time, and the king's sons envied him, whereas he was more praised than they.

Now King Beli fell sick; and when the sickness lay heavy on him he called his sons to him and said to them: "This sickness will bring me to mine end, therefore will I bid you this, that ye hold fast to those old friends that I have had; for meseems in all things ye fall short of that father and son, Thorstein and Frithiof, yea, both in good counsel and in hardihood. A mound ye shall raise over me."

So with that Beli died.

Thereafter Thorstein fell sick; so he spake to Frithiof: "Kinsman," says he, "I will crave this of thee, that thou bow thy will before the king's sons, for their dignity's sake; yet doth my heart speak goodly things to me concerning thy fortune. Now would I be laid in my mound over against King Beli's mound, down by the sea on this side the firth, whereas it may be easiest for us to cry out each to each of tidings drawing nigh."

A little after this Thorstein departed, and was laid in mound even as he had bidden; but Frithiof took the land and chattels after him. Biorn and Asmund were Frithiof's foster-brethren; they were big and strong men both.

CHAPTER II. FRITHIOF WOOETH INGIBIORG OF THOSE BRETHREN.

SO Frithiof became the most famed of men, and the bravest in all things that may try a man.

Biorn, his foster-brother, he held in most account of all, but Asmund served the twain of them.

The ship Ellidi he gat, the best of good things, of his father's heritage, and another possession therewith—a gold ring; no dearer was in Norway.

So bounteous a man was Frithiof withal, that it was the talk of most, that he was a man of no less honour than those brethren, but it were for the name of king; and for this cause they held Frithiof in hate and enmity, and it was a heavy thing to them that he was called greater than they: furthermore they thought they could see that Ingibiorg, their sister, and Frithiof were of one mind together.

It befell hereon that the kings had to go to a feast to Frithiof's house at Foreness; and there it happened according to wont that he gave to all men beyond that they were worthy of. Now Ingibiorg was there, and she and Frithiof talked long together; and the king's daughter said to him,

“A goodly gold ring hast thou.”

“Yea, in good sooth,” said he.

Thereafter went those brethren to their own home, and greater grew their enmity of Frithiof.

A little after grew Frithiof heavy of mood, and Biorn, his foster-brother, asked him why he fared so.

He said he had it in his mind to woo Ingibiorg. “For though I be named by a lesser name than those brethren, yet am I not fashioned lesser.”

“Even so let us do then,” quoth Biorn. So Frithiof fared with certain men unto those brethren; and the kings were sitting on their father's mound when Frithiof greeted them well, and then set forth his wooing, and prayed for their sister Ingibiorg, the daughter of Beli.

The kings said: “Not otherwise is this thine asking

whereas thou wouldst have us give her to one who lacketh dignity; wherefore we gainsay thee this utterly.”

Frithiof
wooeth
Ingibiorg

Said Frithiof: “Then is mine errand soon sped; but in return never will I give help to you henceforward, nay, though ye need it never so much.”

They said they heeded it nought: so Frithiof went home, and was joyous once more.

CHAPTER III. OF KING RING AND THOSE BRETHREN.

THERE was a king named Ring, who ruled over Ring-realm, which also was in Norway: a mighty folk-king he was, and a great man, but come by now unto his latter days.

Now he spake to his men: “Lo, I have heard that the sons of King Beli have brought to nought their friendship with Frithiof, who is the noblest of men; wherefore will I send men to these kings, and bid them choose whether they will submit them to me and pay me tribute, or else that I bring war on them: and all things then shall lie ready to my hand to take, for they have neither might nor wisdom to withstand me; yet great fame were it to my old age to overcome them.”

After that fared the messengers of King Ring, and found those brethren, Helgi and Halfdan, in Sogn, and spake to them thus: “King Ring sends bidding to you to send him tribute, or else will he war against your realm.”

They answered and said that they would not learn in the days of their youth what they would be loth to know in their old age, even how to serve King Ring with shame. “Nay, now shall we draw together all the folk that we may.”

Even so they did; but now, when they beheld their force that it was but little, they sent Hilding their fosterer to Frithiof to bid him come help them against King Ring. Now Frithiof sat at the knave-play when Hilding came thither, who spake thus: “Our kings send thee greeting, Frithiof, and would have thy help in battle against King

Frithiof
the Bold

Ring, who cometh against their realm with violence and wrong."

Frithiof answered him nought, but said to Biorn, with whom he was playing: "A bare place in thy board, foster-brother, and nowise mayst thou amend it; nay, for my part I shall beset thy red piece there, and wot whether it be safe."

Then Hilding spake again:

"King Helgi bade me say thus much, Frithiof, that thou shouldst go on this journey with them, or else look for ill at their hands when they at the last come back."

"A double game, foster-brother," said Biorn; "and two ways to meet thy play."

Frithiof said: "Thy play is to fall first on the knave, yet the double game is sure to be."

No other outcome of his errand had Hilding: he went back speedily to the kings, and told them Frithiof's answer.

They asked Hilding what he made out of those words. He said:

"Whereas he spake of the bare place he will have been thinking of the lack in this journey of yours; but when he said he would beset the red piece, that will mean Ingibiorg, your sister; so give ye all the heed ye may to her. But whereas I threatened him with ill from you, Biorn deemed the game a double one; but Frithiof said that the knave must be set on first, speaking thereby of King Ring."

So then the brethren arrayed them for departing; but, ere they went, they let bring Ingibiorg and eight women with her to Baldur's Meads, saying that Frithiof would not be so mad rash as to go see her thither, since there was none who durst make riot there.

Then fared those brethren south to Jadar, and met King Ring in Sogn-Sound.

Now, herewith was King Ring most of all wroth that the brothers had said that they accounted it a shame to fight with a man so old that he might not get a-horseback unholpen.

CHAPTER IV. FRITHIOF GOES TO BALDUR'S MEADS. Frithiof goes to Baldur's Meads

STRAIGHTWAY whenas the kings were gone away Frithiof took his raiment of state and set the goodly gold ring on his arm; then went the foster-brethren down to the sea and launched Ellidi. Then said Biorn: "Whither away, foster-brother?"

"To Baldur's Meads," said Frithiof, "to be glad with Ingibiorg."

Biorn said: "A thing unmeet to do, to make the gods wroth with us."

"Well, it shall be risked this time," said Frithiof; "and withal, more to me is Ingibiorg's grace than Baldur's grame."

Therewith they rowed over the firth, and went up to Baldur's Meads and to Ingibiorg's bower, and there she sat with eight maidens, and the new comers were eight also.

But when they came there, lo, all the place was hung with cloth of pall and precious webs.

Then Ingibiorg arose and said:

"Why art thou so overbold, Frithiof, that thou art come here without the leave of my brethren to make the gods angry with thee?"

Frithiof says: "Howsoever that may be, I hold thy love of more account than the gods' hate."

Ingibiorg answered: "Welcome art thou here, thou and thy men!"

Then she made place for him to sit beside her, and drank to him in the best of wine; and thus they sat and were merry together.

Then beheld Ingibiorg the goodly ring on his arm, and asked him if that precious thing were his own. Frithiof said Yea, and she praised the ring much. Then Frithiof said:

"I will give thee the ring if thou wilt promise to give it to no one, but to send it to me when thou no longer shalt have will to keep it: and hereon shall we plight troth each to other."

So with this troth-plighting they exchanged rings.

Frithiof Frithiof was oft at Baldur's Meads a-night time, and every
the Bold day between whiles would he go thither to be glad with
Ingibiorg.

CHAPTER V. THOSE BRETHREN COME HOME AGAIN.

NOW tells the tale of those brethren, that they met King Ring, and he had more folk than they: then went men betwixt them, and sought to make peace, so that no battle should be: thereto King Ring assented on such terms that the brethren should submit them to him, and give him in marriage Ingibiorg their sister, with the third part of all their possessions.

The kings said Yea thereto, for they saw that they had to do with overwhelming might: so the peace was fast bound by oaths, and the wedding was to be at Sogn whenas King Ring should go see his betrothed.

So those brethren fare home with their folk, right ill content with things. But Frithiof, when he deemed that the brethren might be looked for home again, spake to the king's daughter:

"Sweetly and well have ye done to us, neither has good-man Baldur been wroth with us; but now as soon as ye wot of the kings' coming home, spread the sheets of your beds abroad on the Hall of the Goddesses, for that is the highest of all the garth, and we may see it from our stead."

The king's daughter said: "Thou dost not after the like of any other: but certes, we welcome dear friends whenas ye come to us."

So Frithiof went home; and the next morning he went out early, and when he came in then he spake and sang:

"Now must I tell
To our good men
That over and done
Are our fair journeys;

No more a-shipboard
Shall we be going,
For there are the sheets
Spread out a-bleaching."

Those
Brethren
come
home

Then they went out, and saw that the Hall of the Goddesses was all thatched with white linen. Biorn spake and said : "Now are the kings come home, and but a little while have we to sit in peace, and good were it, meseems, to gather folk together."

So did they, and men came flocking thither.

Now the brethren soon heard of the ways of Frithiof and Ingibiorg, and of the gathering of men. So King Helgi spake:

"A wondrous thing how Baldur will bear what shame soever Frithiof and she will lay on him ! Now will I send men to him, and wot what atonement he will offer us, or else will I drive him from the land, for our strength seemeth to me not enough that we should fight with him as now."

So Hilding, their fosterer, bare the king's errand to Frithiof and his friends, and spake in such wise: "This atonement the kings will have of thee, Frithiof, that thou go gather the tribute of the Orkneys, which has not been paid since Beli died, for they need money, whereas they are giving Ingibiorg their sister in marriage, and much of wealth with her."

Frithiof said : "This thing only somewhat urges us to peace, the good will of our kin departed; but no trustiness will those brethren show herein. But this condition I make, that our lands be in good peace while we are away." So this was promised and all bound by oaths.

Then Frithiof arrays him for departing, and is captain of men brave and of good help, eighteen in company.

Now his men asked him if he would not go to King Helgi and make peace with him, and pray himself free from Baldur's wrath.

But he answered : "Hereby I swear that I will never pray Helgi for peace."

Frithiof
the Bold

Then he went aboard Ellidi, and they sailed out along the Sognfirth.

But when Frithiof was gone from home, King Halfdan spake to Helgi his brother: "Better lordship and more had we if Frithiof had payment for his masterful deed: now therefore let us burn his stead, and bring on him and his men such a storm on the sea as shall make an end of them."

Helgi said it was a thing meet to be done.

So then they burned up clean all the stead at Foreness and robbed it of all goods; and after that sent for two witch-wives, Heidi and Hamglom, and gave them money to raise against Frithiof and his men so mighty a storm that they should all be lost at sea. So they sped the witch-song, and went up on the witch-mount with spells and sorcery.

CHAPTER VI. FRITHIOF SAILS FOR THE ORKNEYS.

SO when Frithiof and his men were come out of the Sognfirth there fell on them great wind and storm, and an exceedingly heavy sea; but the ship drave on swiftly, for sharp built she was, and the best to breast the sea.

So now Frithiof sang:

"Oft let I swim from Sogn
My tarred ship sooty-sided,
When maids sat o'er the mead-horn
Amidst of Baldur's Meadows;
Now while the storm is wailing
Farewell I bid you maidens,
Still shall ye love us, sweet ones,
Though Ellidi the sea fill."

Said Biorn: "Thou mightest find other work to do than singing songs over the maids of Baldur's Meadows."

"Of such work shall I not speedily run dry, though," said Frithiof. Then they bore up north to the sounds nigh those isles that are called Solundir, and therewith was the gale at its hardest.

Then sang Frithiof:

“Now is the sea a-swelling,
And sweepeth the rack onward;
Spells of old days cast o’er us
Make ocean all unquiet;
No more shall we be striving
Mid storm with wash of billows,
But Solundir shall shelter
Our ship with ice-beat rock-walls.”

Frithiof
sails for
the
Orkneys

So they lay to under the lee of the isles hight Solundir, and were minded to abide there; but straightway thereon the wind fell: then they turned away from under the lee of the islands, and now their voyage seemed hopeful to them, because the wind was fair awhile: but soon it began to freshen again.

Then sang Frithiof:

“In days foredone
From Foreness strand
I rowed to meet
Maid Ingibiorg;
But now I sail
Through chilly storm
And wide away
My long-worm driveth.”

And now when they were come far out into the main, once more the sea waxed wondrous troubled, and a storm arose with so great drift of snow, that none might see the stem from the stern: and they shipped seas, so that they must be ever a-baling. So Frithiof sang:

“The salt waves see we nought
As seaward drive we ever
Before the witch-wrought weather,
We well-famed kings’-defenders:

Frithiof
the Bold

Here are we all a-standing,
With all Solundir hull-down,
Eighteen brave lads a-baling
Black Ellidi to bring home."

Said Biorn: "Needs must he who fareth far fall in with
diverse hap." "Yea, certes, foster-brother," said Frithiof.
And he sang withal:

"Helgi it is that helpeth
The white-head billows' waxing;
Cold time unlike the kissing
In the close of Baldur's Meadow!
So is the hate of Helgi
To that heart's love she giveth.
O would that here I held her,
Gift high above all giving!"

"Maybe," said Biorn, "she is looking higher than thou
now art: what matter when all is said?"

"Well," says Frithiof, "now is the time to show ourselves
to be men of avail, though blither tide it was at Baldur's
Meadows."

So they turned to in manly wise, for there were the bravest
of men come together in the best ship of the Northlands.
But Frithiof sang a stave:

"So come in the West-sea,
Nought see I the billows,
The sea-water seemeth
As sweeping of wild-fire.
Topple the rollers,
Toss the hills swan-white,
Ellidi wallows
O'er steep of the wave-hills."

Then they shipped a huge sea, so that all stood a-baling.

But Frithiof sang:

“With love-moved mouth the maiden
Me pledgeth though I founder.
Ah! bright sheets lay a-bleaching,
East there on brents the swan loves.”

Frithiof
sails for
the
Orkneys

Biorn said: “Art thou of mind belike that the maids of
Sogn will weep many tears over thee?”

Said Frithiof: “Surely that was in my mind.”

Therewith so great a sea broke over the bows, that the
water came in like the in-falling of a river; but it availed them
much that the ship was so good, and the crew aboard her so
hardy.

Now sang Biorn:

“No widow, methinks,
To thee or me drinks:
No ring-bearer fair
Biddeth draw near;
Salt are our eyne
Soaked in the brine;
Strong our arms are no more,
And our eyelids smart sore.”

Quoth Asmund: “Small harm though your arms be tried
somewhat, for no pity we had from you when we rubbed our
eyes whenas ye must needs rise early a-mornings to go to
Baldur’s Meadows.”

“Well,” said Frithiof, “why singest thou not, Asmund?”

“Not I,” said Asmund; yet sang a ditty straightway:

“Sharp work about the sail was
When o’er the ship seas tumbled,
And there was I a-working
Within-board ’gainst eight balers;

Frithiof
the Bold

Better it was to bower,
Bringing the women breakfast,
Than here to be 'mid billows
Black Ellidi a-baling."

"Thou accountest thy help of no less worth than it is?" said Frithiof, laughing therewith; "but sure it showeth the thrall's blood in thee that thou wouldst fain be a-waiting at table."

Now it blew harder and harder yet, so that to those who were aboard liker to huge peaks and mountains than to waves seemed the sea-breakers that crashed on all sides against the ship.

Then Frithiof sang:

"On bolster I sat
In Baldur's Mead erst,
And all songs that I could
To the king's daughter sang;
Now on Ran's bed belike
Must I soon be a-lying,
And another shall be
By Ingibiorg's side."

Biorn said: "Great fear lieth ahead of us, foster-brother, and now dread hath crept into thy words, which is ill with such a good man as thou."

Says Frithiof: "Neither fear nor fainting is it, though I sing now of those our merry journeys; yet perchance more hath been said of them than need was: but most men would think death surer than life, if they were so bested as we be."

"Yet shall I answer thee somewhat," said Biorn, and sang:

"Yet one gain have I gotten
Thou gatst not 'mid thy fortune,
For meet play did I make me
With Ingibiorg's eight maidens;

Red rings we laid together
Aright in Baldur's Meadow,
When far off was the warder
Of the wide land of Halfdan."

Frithiof
sails for
the
Orkneys

"Well," said he, "we must be content with things as they are, foster-brother."

Therewith so great a sea smote them, that the bulwark was broken and both the sheets, and four men were washed overboard and all lost.

Then sang Frithiof:

"Both sheets are bursten
Amid the great billows,
Four swains are sunk
In the fathomless sea."

"Now, meseems," said Frithiof, "it may well be that some of us will go to the house of Ran, nor shall we deem us well sped if we come not thither in glorious array; wherefore it seems good to me that each man of us here should have somewhat of gold on him."

Then he smote asunder the ring, Ingibiorg's gift, and shared it between all his men, and sang a stave withal:

"The red ring here I hew me
Once owned of Halfdan's father,
The wealthy lord of erewhile,
Or the sea waves undo us,
So on the guests shall gold be,
If we have need of guesting;
Meet so for mighty men-folk
Amid Ran's hall to hold them."

"Not all so sure is it that we come there," said Biorn;
"and yet it may well be so."

Now, Frithiof and his folk found that the ship had great

Frithiof
the Bold

way on her, and they knew not what lay ahead, for all was mirk on either board, so that none might see the stem or stern from amidships; and therewith was there great drift of spray amid the furious wind, and frost, and snow, and deadly cold.

Now Frithiof went up to the masthead, and when he came down he said to his fellows: "A sight exceeding wondrous have I seen, for a great whale went in a ring about the ship, and I misdoubt me that we come nigh to some land, and that he is keeping the shore against us; for certes King Helgi has dealt with us in no friendly wise, neither will this his messenger be friendly. Moreover I saw two women on the back of the whale, and they it is who will have brought this great storm on us with the worst of spells and witchcraft; but now we shall try which may prevail, my fortune or their devilry, so steer ye at your straightest, and I will smite these evil things with beams."

Therewith he sang a stave:

"See I troll women
Twain on the billows,
E'en they whom Helgi
Hither hath sent.
Ellidi now
Or ever her way stop
Shall smite the backs
Of these asunder."

So tells the tale that this wonder went with the good ship Ellidi, that she knew the speech of man.

But Biorn said: "Now may we see the treason of those brethren against us." Therewith he took the tiller, but Frithiof caught up a forked beam, and ran into the prow, and sang a stave:

"Ellidi, hail!
Leap high o'er the billows!
Break of the troll wives
Brow or teeth now!

Break cheek or jaw
Of the cursed woman,
One foot or twain
Of the ogress filthy."

Frithiof
sails for
the
Orkneys

Therewith he drave his fork at one of the skin-changers, and the beak of Ellidi smote the other on the back, and the backs of both were broken; but the whale took the deep, and gat him gone, and they never saw him after.

Then the wind fell, but the ship lay water-logged; so Frithiof called out to his men, and bade bale out the ship, but Biorn said:

"No need to work now, verily!"

"Be thou not afeard, foster-brother," said Frithiof, "ever was it the wont of good men of old time to be helpful while they might, whatsoever should come after."

And therewith he sang a stave:

"No need, fair fellows,
To fear the death-day;
Rather be glad,
Good men of mine:
For if dreams wot aught
All nights they say
I yet shall have
My Ingibiorg."

Then they baled out the ship; and they were now come nigh unto land; but there was yet a flaw of wind in their teeth. So then did Frithiof take the two bow oars again, and rowed full mightily. Therewith the weather brightened, and they saw that they were come out to Effia Sound, and so there they made land.

The crew were exceeding weary; but so stout a man was Frithiof that he bore eight men a-land over the foreshore, but Biorn bore two, and Asmund one. Then sang Frithiof:

"Fast bare I up
To the fire-lit house

Frithiof
the Bold

My men all dazed
With the drift of the storm:
And the sail moreover
To the sand I carried;
With the might of the sea
Is there no more to do."

CHAPTER VII. FRITHIOF AT THE ORKNEYS.

NOW Earl Angantyr was at Effia whenas Frithiof and his folk came a-land there. But his way it was, when he was sitting at the drink, that one of his men should sit at the watch-window, looking weatherward from the drinking hall, and keep watch there. From a great horn drank he ever: and still as one was emptied another was filled for him. And he who held the watch when Frithiof came a-land was called Hallward; and now he saw where Frithiof and his men went, and sang a stave:

"Men see I a-baling
Amid the storm's might;
Six bale on Ellidi
Seven are a-rowing;
Like is he in the stem,
Straining hard at the oars,
To Frithiof the Bold,
The brisk in the battle."

So when he had drunk out the horn, he cast it in through the window, and spake to the woman who gave him drink:

"Take up from the floor,
O fair-going woman,
The horn cast adown
Drunk out to the end!
I behold men at sea
Who, storm-beaten, shall need
Help at our hands
Ere the haven they make."

Now the Earl heard what Hallward sang; so he asked for tidings, and Hallward said: "Men are come a-land here, much forewearied, yet brave lads belike: but one of them is so hardy that he beareth the others ashore."

Then said the Earl, "Go ye, and meet them, and welcome them in seemly wise; if this be Frithiof, the son of Hersir Thorstein, my friend, he is a man famed far and wide for all prowess."

Then there took up the word a man named Atli, a great viking, and he spake: "Now shall that be proven which is told of, that Frithiof hath sworn never to be first in the craving of peace."

There were ten men in company with him, all evil and outrageous, who often wrought berserksgang.

So when they met Frithiof they took to their weapons.

But Atli said,

"Good to turn hither, Frithiof! Clutching ernes should claw; and we no less, Frithiof! Yea, and now mayst thou hold to thy word, and not crave first for peace."

So Frithiof turned to meet them, and sang a stave:

"Nay, nay, in nought
Now shall ye cow us.
Blenching hearts
Isle-abiders!
Alone with you ten
The fight will I try,
Rather than pray
For peace at your hands."

Then came Hallward thereto, and spake:

"The Earl wills that ye all be made welcome here: neither shall any set on you."

Frithiof said he would take that with a good heart; howsoever he was ready for either peace or war.

So thereon they went to the Earl, and he made Frithiof and all his men right welcome, and they abode with him, in

Frithiof great honour holden, through the wintertide; and oft would
the Bold the Earl ask of their voyage: so Biorn sang:

“There baled we, wight fellows,
Washed over and over
On both boards
By billows;
For ten days we baled there,
And eight thereunto.”

The Earl said: “Well nigh did the king undo you; it is ill seen of such-like kings as are meet for nought but to overcome men by wizardry. But now I wot,” says Angantyr, “of thine errand hither, Frithiof, that thou art sent after the scat: whereto I give thee a speedy answer, that never shall King Helgi get scat of me, but to thee will I give money, even as much as thou wilt; and thou mayest call it scat if thou hast a mind to, or whatso else thou wilt.”

So Frithiof said that he would take the money.

CHAPTER VIII. KING RING WEDDETH INGI-BIORG.

NOW shall it be told of what came to pass in Norway the while Frithiof was away: for those brethren let burn up all the stead at Foreness. Moreover, while the weird sisters were at their spells they tumbled down from off their high witch-mount, and brake both their backs.

That autumn came King Ring north to Sogn to his wedding, and there at a noble feast drank his bridal with Ingibjorg.

“Whence came that goodly ring which thou hast on thine arm?” said King Ring to Ingibjorg.

She said her father had owned it, but he answered and said:

“Nay, for Frithiof’s gift it is: so take it off thine arm straightway; for no gold shalt thou lack whenas thou comest to Elfhome.”

So she gave the ring to King Helgi's wife, and bade her give it to Frithiof when he came back. King Ring weddeth

Then King Ring wended home with his wife, and loved her with exceeding great love. Ingibiorg

CHAP. IX. FRITHIOF BRINGS THE TRIBUTE TO THE KINGS.

THE spring after these things Frithiof departed from the Orkneys and Earl Angantyr in all good liking; and Hallward went with Frithiof.

But when they came to Norway they heard tell of the burning of Frithiof's stead.

So when he was gotten to Foreness, Frithiof said: "Black is my house waxen now; no friends have been at work here." And he sang withal:

"Frank and free,
With my father dead,
In Foreness old
We drank aforetime.
Now my abode
Behold I burned;
For many ill deeds
The kings must I pay."

Then he sought rede of his men what was to be done; but they bade him look to it: then he said that the scat must first be paid out of hand. So they rowed over the Firth to Sowstrand; and there they heard that the kings were gone to Baldur's Meads to sacrifice to the gods; so Frithiof and Biorn went up thither, and bade Hallward and Asmund break up meanwhile all ships, both great and small, that were anigh; and they did so. Then went Frithiof and his fellow to the door at Baldur's Meads, and Frithiof would go in. Biorn bade him fare warily, since he must needs go in alone; but Frithiof charged him to abide without, and keep watch; and he sang a stave:

Frithiof
the Bold

“All alone go I
Unto the stead;
No folk I need
For the finding of kings;
But cast ye the fire
O'er the kings' dwelling,
If I come not again
In the cool of the even.”

“Ah,” said Biorn, “a goodly singing !”

Then went Frithiof in, and saw but few folk in the Hall of the Goddesses; there were the kings at their blood-offering, sitting a-drinking; a fire was there on the floor, and the wives of the kings sat thereby, a-warming the gods, while others anointed them, and wiped them with napkins.

So Frithiof went up to King Helgi and said: “Have here thy scat !”

And therewith he heaved up the purse wherein was the silver, and drave it on to the face of the king; whereby were two of his teeth knocked out, and he fell down stunned in his high seat; but Halfdan got hold of him, so that he fell not into the fire. Then sang Frithiof :

“Have here thy scat,
High lord of the warriors !
Heed that and thy teeth,
Lest all tumble about thee !
Lo the silver abideth
At the bight of this bag here,
That Biorn and I
Betwixt us have borne thee.”

Now there were but few folk in the chamber, because the drinking was in another place; so Frithiof went out straightway along the floor, and beheld therewith that goodly ring of his on the arm of Helgi's wife as she warmed Baldur at the fire; so he took hold of the ring, but it was fast to her arm,

and he dragged her by it over the pavement toward the door, Frithiof
and Baldur fell from her into the fire; then Halfdan's wife brings the
caught hastily at Baldur, whereby the god that she was Tribute
warming fell likewise into the fire, and the fire caught both
the gods, for they had been anointed, and ran up thence into
the roof, so that the house was all ablaze : but Frithiof got
the ring to him ere he came out.

So then Biorn asked him what had come of his going in
there; but Frithiof held up the ring and sang a stave :

“The heavy purse smote Helgi
Hard 'midst his scoundrel's visage:
Lowly bowed Halfdan's brother,
Fell bundling 'mid the high seat:
There Baldur fell a-burning.
But first my bright ring gat I.
Fast from the roaring fire
I dragged the bent crone forward.”

Men say that Frithiof cast a firebrand up on to the roof,
so that the hall was all ablaze, and therewith sang a stave:

“Down stride we toward the sea-strand,
And strong deeds set a-going,
For now the blue flame bickers
Amidst of Baldur's Meadow.”

And therewith they went down to the sea.

CHAPTER X. FRITHIOF MADE AN OUTLAW.

BUT as soon as King Helgi had come to himself he
bade follow after Frithiof speedily, and slay them all,
him and his fellows: “A man of forfeit life, who
spareth no Place of Peace !”

So they blew the gathering for the kings' men, and when
they came out to the hall they saw that it was afire; so King
Halfdan went thereto with some of the folk, but King Helgi

Frithiof followed after Frithiof and his men, who were by then gotten a-shipboard and were lying on their oars.
the Bold

Now King Helgi and his men find that all the ships are scuttled, and they have to turn back to shore, and have lost some men: then waxed King Helgi so wroth that he grew mad, and he bent his bow, and laid an arrow on the string, and drew at Frithiof so mightily that the bow brake asunder in the midst.

But when Frithiof saw that, then he gat him to the two bow oars of Ellidi, and laid so hard on them that they both brake, and with that he sang a stave:

“Young Ingibiorg
Kissed I aforetime,
Kissed Beli’s daughter
In Baldur’s Meadow.
So shall the oars
Of Ellidi
Break both together
As Helgi’s bow breaks.”

Then the land-wind ran down the firth and they hoisted sail and sailed; but Frithiof bade them look to it that they might have no long abiding there. And so withal they sailed out of the Sognfirth, and Frithiof sang:

“Sail we away from Sogn,
E’en as we sailed aforetime,
When flared the fire all over
The house that was my fathers’.
Now is the bale a-burning
Amidst of Baldur’s Meadow:
But wend I as a wild-wolf,
Well wot I they have sworn it.”

“What shall we turn to now, foster-brother?” said Biorn.

“I may not abide here in Norway,” said Frithiof: “I will learn the ways of warriors, and sail a-warring.”

So they searched the isles and out-skerries the summer long, and gathered thereby riches and renown; but in autumn-tide they made for the Orkneys, and Angantyr gave them good welcome, and they abode there through the winter-tide.

Frithiof
made an
Outlaw

But when Frithiof was gone from Norway the kings held a Thing, whereat was Frithiof made an outlaw throughout their realm: they took his lands to them, moreover, and King Halfdan took up his abode at Foreness, and built up again all Baldur's Meadow, though it was long ere the fire was slaked there. This misliked King Helgi most, that the gods were all burned up, and great was the cost or ever Baldur's Meadow was built anew fully equal to its first estate.

So King Helgi abode still at Sowstrand.

CHAPTER XI. FRITHIOF FARETH TO SEE KING RING AND INGIBIORG.

FRITHIOF waxed ever in riches and renown whithersoever he went: evil men he slew, and grimly strong-thieves, but husbandmen and chapmen he let abide in peace; and now was he called anew Frithiof the Bold; he had gotten to him by now a great company well arrayed, and was become exceeding wealthy of chattels.

But when Frithiof had been three winters a-warring he sailed west, and made the Wick; then he said that he would go a-land: "But ye shall fare a-warring without me this winter; for I begin to weary of warfare, and would fain go to the Uplands, and get speech of King Ring: but hither shall ye come to meet me in the summer, and I will be here the first day of summer."

Biorn said: "This counsel is naught wise, though thou must needs rule; rather would I that we fare north to Sogn, and slay both those kings, Helgi and Halfdan."

"It is all naught," said Frithiof; "I must needs go see King Ring and Ingibiorg."

Says Biorn: "Loth am I hereto that thou shouldst risk

Frithiof
the Bold

thyself alone in his hands; for this Ring is a wise man and of great kin, though he be somewhat old."

But Frithiof said he would have his own way: "And thou, Biorn, shalt be captain of our company meanwhile."

So they did as he bade, and Frithiof fared to the Uplands in the autumn, for he desired sore to look upon the love of King Ring and Ingibiorg. But or ever he came there he did on him, over his clothes, a great cloak all shaggy; two staves he had in his hand, and a mask over his face, and he made as if he were exceeding old.

So he met certain herdsmen, and, going heavily, he asked them: "Whence are ye?" They answered and said: "We are of Streitaland, whereas the king dwelleth."

Quoth the carle: "Is King Ring a mighty king, then?"

They answered: "Thou lookest to us old enough to have cunning to know what manner of man is King Ring in all wise."

The carle said that he had heeded salt-boiling more than the ways of kings; and therewith he goes up to the king's house.

So when the day was well worn he came into the hall, blinking about as a dotard, and took an outward place, pulling his hood over him to hide his visage.

Then spake King Ring to Ingibiorg: "There is come into the hall a man far bigger than other men."

The queen answered: "That is no such great tidings here."

But the king spake to a serving-man who stood before the board, and said: "Go thou, and ask yon cowed man who he is, whence he cometh, and of what kin he is."

So the lad ran down the hall to the new-comer and said: "What art thou called, thou man? Where wert thou last night? Of what kin art thou?"

Said the cowed man: "Quick come thy questions, good fellow! but hast thou skill to understand if I shall tell thee hereof?"

"Yea, certes," said the lad.

"Well," said the cowl-bearer, "Thief is my name, with Wolf was I last night, and in Grief-ham was I reared."

Then ran the lad back to the king, and told him the answer Frithiof
of the new-comer. fareth to

"Well told, lad," said the king; "but for that land of King Ring
Grief-ham, I know it well: it may well be that the man is of
no light heart, and yet a wise man shall he be, and of great
worth I account him."

Said the queen: "A marvellous fashion of thine, that thou
must needs talk so freely with every carle that cometh
hither! Yea, what is the worth of him, then?"

"That wottest thou no clearer than I," said the king;
"but I see that he thinketh more than he talketh, and is
peering all about him."

Therewith the king sent a man after him, and so the
cowl-bearer went up before the king, going somewhat bent,
and greeted him in a low voice. Then said the king: "What
art thou called, thou big man?"

And the cowl-bearer answered and sang:

"PEACE-THIEF they called me
On the prow with the Vikings;
But WAR-THIEF whenas
I set widows a-weeping;
SPEAR-THIEF when I
Sent forth the barbed shafts;
BATTLE-THIEF when I
Burst forth on the king;
HEL-THIEF when I
Tossed up the small babies:
ISLE-THIEF when I
In the outer isles harried;
SLAINS-THIEF when I
Sat aloft over men:
Yet since have I drifted
With salt-boiling carls,
Needy of help
Ere hither I came."

Said the king: "Thou hast gotten thy name of Thief

Frithiof
the Bold

from many a matter, then; but where wert thou last night, and what is thy home?"

The cowl-bearer said: "In Grief-ham I grew up; but heart drave me hither, and home have I nowhere."

The king said: "Maybe indeed that thou hast been nourished in Grief-ham a certain while; yet also maybe that thou wert born in a place of peace. But in the wild-wood must thou have lain last night, for no goodman dwelleth anigh named Wolf; but whereas thou sayest thou hast no home, so is it, that thou belike deemest thy home nought, because of thy heart that drave thee hither."

Then spake Ingibiorg: "Go, Thief, get thee to some other harbour, or in to the guest-hall."

"Nay," said the king, "I am old enow to know how to marshal guests; so do off thy cowl, new-comer, and sit down on my other hand."

"Yea, old, and over old," said the queen, "when thou settest staff-carles by thy side."

"Nay, lord, it beseemeth not," said Thief; "better it were as the queen sayeth. I have been more used to boiling salt than sitting beside lords."

"Do thou my will," said the king, "for I will rule this time."

So Thief cast his cowl from him, and was clad thereunder in a dark blue kirtle; on his arm, moreover, was the goodly gold ring, and a thick silver belt was round about him, with a great purse on it, and therein silver pennies glittering; a sword was girt to his side, and he had a great fur hood on his head, for his eyes were bleared, and his face all wrinkled.

"Ah! now we fare better, say I," quoth the king; "but do thou, queen, give him a goodly mantle, well shapen for him."

"Thou shalt rule, my lord," said the queen; "but in small account do I hold this Thief of thine."

So then he gat a good mantle over him, and sat down in the high-seat beside the king.

The queen waxed red as blood when she saw the goodly ring, yet would she give him never a word; but the king was

exceeding blithe with him and said: "A goodly ring hast thou on thine arm there; thou must have boiled salt long enough to get it." Frithiof fareth to King Ring

Says he, "That is all the heritage of my father."

"Ah!" says the king, "maybe thou hast more than that; well, few salt-boiling carles are thy peers, I deem, unless eld is deep in mine eyes now."

So Thief was there through the winter amid good entertainment, and well accounted of by all men; he was bounteous of his wealth, and joyous with all men: the queen held but little converse with him; but the king and he were ever blithe together.

CHAPTER XII. FRITHIOF SAVES THE KING AND QUEEN ON THE ICE.

THE tale tells that on a time King Ring and the queen, and a great company, would go to a feast. So the king spake to Thief: "Wilt thou fare with us, or abide at home?"

He said he had liefer go; and the king said: "Then am I the more content."

So they went on their ways, and had to cross a certain frozen water. Then said Thief: "I deem this ice untrustworthy; meseemeth ye fare unwarily."

Quoth the king: "It is often shown how heedful in thine heart thou wilt be to us."

So a little after the ice broke in beneath them, and Thief ran thereto, and dragged the wain to him, with all that was therein; and the king and the queen both sat in the same: so Thief drew it all up on to the ice, with the horses that were yoked to the wain.

Then spake King Ring: "Right well drawn, Thief! Frithiof the Bold himself would have drawn no stronger had he been here; doughty followers are such as thou!"

So they came to the feast, and there is nought to tell thereof, and the king went back again with seemly gifts.

CHAPTER XIII. THE KING SLEEPS BEFORE
FRITHIOF.

NOW weareth away the mid-winter, and when spring cometh, the weather groweth fair, the wood bloometh, the grass groweth, and ships may glide betwixt land and land. So on a day the king says to his folk: "I will that ye come with us for our disport out into the woods, that we may look upon the fairness of the earth."

So did they, and went flock-meal with the king into the woods; but so it befell, that the king and Frithiof were gotten alone together afar from other men, and the king said he was heavy, and would fain sleep. Then said Thief: "Get thee home, then, lord, for it better beseemeth men of high estate to lie at home than abroad."

"Nay," said the king, "so will I not do." And he laid him down therewith, and slept fast, snoring loud.

Thief sat close by him, and presently drew his sword from his sheath and cast it far away from him.

A little while after the king woke up, and said: "Was it not so, FRITHIOF, that a many things came into thy mind e'en now? But well hast thou dealt with them, and great honour shalt thou have of me. Lo, now, I knew thee straightway that first evening thou camest into our hall: now nowise speedily shalt thou depart from us; and somewhat great abideth thee."

Said Frithiof: "Lord King, thou hast done to me well, and in friendly wise; but yet must I get me gone soon, because my company cometh speedily to meet me, as I have given them charge to do."

So then they rode home from the wood, and the king's folk came flocking to him, and home they fared to the hall and drank joyously; and it was made known to all folk that Frithiof the Bold had been abiding there through the winter-tide.

CHAP. XIV. KING RING'S GIFT TO FRITHIOF. King
EARLY of a morning-tide one smote on the door of Ring's
that hall, wherein slept the king and queen, and many gift to
others: then the king asked who it was at the hall door; Frithiof
and so he who was without said: "Here am I, Frithiof;
and I am arrayed for my departure."

Then was the door opened, and Frithiof came in, and sang
a stave:

"Have great thanks for the guesting
Thou gavest with all bounty;
Dight fully for wayfaring
Is the feeder of the eagle;
But, Ingibiorg, I mind thee
While yet on earth we tarry;
Live gloriously! I give thee
This gift for many kisses."

And therewith he cast the goodly ring towards Ingibiorg,
and bade her take it.

The king smiled at this stave of his, and said: "Yea,
forsooth, she hath more thanks for thy winter quarters than
I; yet hath she not been more friendly to thee than I."

Then sent the king his serving-folk to fetch victuals and
drink, and saith that they must eat and drink before Frithiof
departed. "So arise, queen, and be joyful!" But she said she
was loth to fall a-feasting so early.

"Nay, we will eat all together," said King Ring; and they
did so.

But when they had drank a while King Ring spake: "I
would that thou abide here, Frithiof; for my sons are but
children and I am old, and unmeet for the warding of my
realm, if any should bring war against it."

Frithiof said: "Speedily must I be gone, lord." And he
sang:

"Oh, live, King Ring,
Both long and hale!
The highest king

Frithiof
the Bold

'Neath heaven's skirt !
Ward well, O king,
Thy wife and land,
For Ingibiorg now
Never more shall I meet."

Then quoth King Ring :

"Fare not away,
O Frithiof, thus,
With downcast heart,
O dearest of chieftains !
For now will I give thee
For all thy good gifts,
Far better things
Than thou wottest thyself."

And again he sang :

"To Frithiof the famous
My fair wife I give,
And all things therewith
That are unto me."

Then Frithiof took up the word and sang :

"Nay, how from thine hands
These gifts may I have,
But if thou hast fared
By the last way of fate ?"

The king said: "I would not give thee this, but that I deem it will soon be so, for I sicken now. But of all men I would that thou shouldst have the joy of this; for thou art the crown of all Norway. The name of king will I give thee also; and all this, because Ingibiorg's brethren would begrudge thee any honour; and would be slower in getting thee a wife than I am."

Said Frithiof: "Have all thanks, lord, for thy good-will

beyond that I looked for ! but I will have no higher dignity than to be called earl.”

Then King Ring gave Frithiof rule over all his realm in due wise, and the name of earl therewith ; and Frithiof was to rule it until such time as the sons of King Ring were of age to rule their own realm. So King Ring lay sick a little while, and then died ; and great mourning was made for him ; then was there a mound cast over him, and much wealth laid therein, according to his bidding.

Thereafter Frithiof made a noble feast, whereunto his folk came ; and thereat was drunken at one and the same time the heritage feast after King Ring, and the bridal of Frithiof and Ingibiorg.

After these things Frithiof abode in his realm, and was deemed therein a most noble man ; he and Ingibiorg had many children.

CHAPTER XV. FRITHIOF KING IN SOGN.

NOW those kings of Sogn, the brethren of Ingibiorg, heard these tidings, how that Frithiof had gotten a king's rule in Ringrealm, and had wedded Ingibiorg their sister. Then says Helgi to Halfdan, his brother, that unheard of it was, and a deed over-bold, that a mere hersir's son should have her to wife : and so thereat they gather together a mighty army, and go their ways therewith to Ringrealm, with the mind to slay Frithiof, and lay all his realm under them.

But when Frithiof was ware of this, he gathered folk, and spake to the queen moreover : “ New war is come upon our realm ; and now, in whatso wise the dealings go, fain am I that thy ways to me grow no colder.”

She said : “ In such wise have matters gone that I must needs let thee be the highest.”

Now was Biorn come from the east to help Frithiof ; so they fared to the fight, and it befell, as ever erst, that Frithiof was the foremost in the peril : King Helgi and he came to handy-blows, and there he slew King Helgi.

Frithiof
the Bold

Then bade Frithiof raise up the Shield of Peace, and the battle was stayed; and therewith he cried to King Halfdan :
“Two choices are in thine hands now, either that thou give up all to my will, or else gettest thou thy bane like thy brother; for now may men see that mine is the better part.”

So Halfdan chose to lay himself and his realm under Frithiof's sway; and so now Frithiof became ruler over Sogn-folk, and Halfdan was to be Hersir in Sogn and pay Frithiof tribute, while Frithiof ruled Ringrealm. So Frithiof had the name of King of Sogn-folk from the time that he gave up Ringrealm to the sons of King Ring, and thereafter he won Hordaland also. He and Ingibiorg had two sons, called Gunnthiof and Hunthiof, men of might, both of them.

AND SO HERE ENDETH THE STORY OF
FRITHIOF THE BOLD.

THE STORY OF VIGLUND THE FAIR

CHAPTER I. OF KING HARALD FAIR-HAIR.

HARALD Fair-hair, son of Halfdan the Black, was sole King of Norway in the days of this story ; and young he was when he gat the kingdom. The wisest of all men was Harald, and well furnished of all prowess that befitted the kingly dignity. The king had a great court, and chose therefor men of fame, even such as were best proven for hardihood and many doughty deeds : and whereas the king was fain to have with him the best men that might be chosen, so also were they held in more account than other men in the land ; because the king was niggard to them neither of wealth nor furtherance if they knew how to bear themselves. Nor, on the other hand, did this thing go for little, that none of those who were against the king's will throve ever ; for some were driven from the land and some slain ; but the king stretched his hand out over all the wealth they left behind. But many men of account fled from Norway, and would not bear the burden of the king, even men of great kin ; for rather would they forego the free lands their fathers owned, their kin and their friends, than lie under the thraldom of the king and the hard days he laid upon them. These went from land to land ; and in those days was Iceland peopled, for many fled thither who might not abide the lordship of King Harald.

CHAPTER II. OF OLOF SUNBEAM.

THERE was a lord named Thorir, a man of mighty power in Norway, a man of fame, and wedded to a noble wife : this earl begat on his wife a woman-child, Olof by name, who was wondrous fair-mannered from her youth up ; and she was the fairest fashioned of all women of Norway, so that her name was lengthened and she was called Olof Sunbeam. The earl loved his daughter much, and was so jealous of her that no son of man might speak with her. He let build a bower for her, and let adorn that house with

Viglund
the Fair

all kinds of craft. Wide about was it carven and fretted, with gold run through the carving; roofed with lead was this dwelling, and fair be-painted within; round about it was a wall of pales, and therein a wicket iron-bolted strongly: neither was the house adorned in meaner wise without than within.

So in this bower dwelt the earl's daughter, and her serving-women; and the earl sent after those women whom he knew to be most courteous, and let them teach his daughter all the deeds of women which it befitted high-born maidens to know: for the earl had mind, as indeed it came to pass, that his daughter should excel all other women in skill and learning as she did in fairness.

But as soon as she was of age thereto, many noble men fell to wooing her. But the earl was hard to please concerning her, and so it came to pass that he gave her to none, but turned them away with courteous words; and for her, she mocked none either by word or deed. So slipped away a while and she had the praise of all men.

Now must the tale tell of other folk. There was a man named Ketil, who bare sway over Raum-realm; he was a mighty man and a wealthy, wise and well befriended. Ketil was wedded, and Ingibjorg was the name of his wife, and she was come of noble blood: two sons they had, Gunnlaug and Sigurd; bynames had those brethren, for Gunnlaug was called the Masterful, and Sigurd the Sage. Ketil let learn his sons all the craft that it was the wont of those days to learn, for he himself was better furnished with such things than most other men. So the brethren had playmates, and they gave them gold and other good things; and ever they rode out with their men to shoot the wild things and fowls of the air, for of the greatest prowess and craft were they.

Goodman Ketil was a great fighting man, four-and-twenty holmgangs had he fought, and had won the victory in all.

There was good friendship between King Harald and Ketil.

This Ketil was so great a lawyer, that he never had to do

in any case, with whomsoever he dealt, that he did not pre- Of Olof
vail; for so soon as he began to talk, all folk deemed that so Sunbeam
it must be as he said.

The king bade Ketil take a higher dignity, saying, that it well befitted him, both for his wealth's sake and for many other matters; but Ketil would not, and said he had liefer be just a very franklin, and hold himself none the less equal to folk of higher dignity.

Ketil loved his wife so well, that he would not have her know a sorrow.

Thus wore the time away.

CHAPTER III. OF THE SONS OF EARL ERIC.

IT befell on a time that King Harald called out his sea-folk, with the mind to go south along the land, and arrayed his journey well, both with ships and men. Ketil got his sons to go with a very fair company in the king's fellowship, but he himself sat at home, for he was now sunken into eld.

Now when the king was ready he sailed south along the land; but when he came south to Rogaland, there was an earl held sway there called Eric; a great chieftain, and well beloved of his men: who, when he heard of the king's coming, let array a fair feast and bade the king thereto with all his company; that the king took, and went ashore with his host, and the earl led him home to his hall, with all his court and all kinds of minstrelsy and songs and harp-playing, and every disport that might be. With such welcoming the earl brought the king to his hall, and set him in the high seat, and there befell the fairest feast, and the king was exceeding joyous, and all his men, because the earl spared in nought to serve the king with all loving-kindness; and the best of drink was borne forth, and men were speedily merry with drink.

The king ever set Ketil's sons beside him, and they had great honour of him: the earl stood before the king, and served himself at his board, and great grew the glee in the hall. Then the king caused those brethren to pour out, and

Viglund
the Fair

set the earl in the high seat beside him; and the brethren did straightway as the king bade, and gat great praise of men for their courtesy. But when the boards were taken up, the earl let bear forth good things which he had chosen for the king, yea, and to all his men he gave some good gift or other; and at the end of this gift-giving the earl let bear forth a harp, whose strings were this one of gold and that one of silver, and the fashion of it most glorious; and the king stretched forth his hand to meet it, and began to smite it; and so great and fair a voice had this harp, that all wondered, and thought they had never heard the like before.

Then spake the earl: "I would, lord, that thou wentest with me for thy disport, and then will I show thee all I have, within and without, and both cornfield and orchard."

So the king did as the earl bade, and went and beheld all about, and made much of it; and they came to a certain apple-orchard wherein was a fair grove, and under the grove three lads a-playing: fair were they all, but one much the most fair. So they sat a-playing at tables, and that one played against the twain; then these deemed that their game was coming to nought before him, and so they cast the board together; thereat was the better one wroth, and he smote each of them with his fist: then they fell to and wrestled, the two against him alone, and he prevailed no less in the wrestling than in the table-play.

Then the earl bade them forbear, and be at one, and they did so, and played at tables as before. And the king and his company went home to the hall, and sat them down; and it was well seen of the king that he thought much of that youngling; and he asked the earl concerning what those lads were.

"They are my sons," said the earl.

"Are they of one mother?" said the king.

"Nay," said the earl.

Then the king asked what they hight, and the earl said, "Sigmund and Helgi, but Thorgrim is the third, and love-born is he."

So a little after came all those brethren into the hall, and Thorgrim went the hindermost; for in this, as in other matters, was he less honoured.

Of the
sons of
Earl Eric

The earl called the boys to him, and bade them go before the king; and they did so, and greeted him: but when they came before him, Thorgrim put a hand on each of his brethren, and pushed them from him, and passed forth betwixt them, and stood up on the footpace and greeted the king, and kissed him: but the king laughed and took the lad, and set him down beside him, and asked him of his mother; but he said he was the sister's son of Hersir Thorir of Sogn. Then the king pulled a gold ring off his arm, and gave it to Thorgrim.

Then Thorgrim went back to his brethren, and the feast endured with the greatest honour till the king declared his will to depart.

"Now," said he, "because of the great-heartedness thou hast shown to me, shalt thou thyself choose thy reward."

The earl was glad thereat, and said, that he would have the king take Thorgrim his son to him: "Better," saith he, "do I deem that than store of pennies, because that everything that thou wouldst do to me, I shall deem so much the better if thou doest it to him; and for that cause am I fain he should go with thee, because I love him the best of all my sons."

So the king said yea thereto, and departed, and Thorgrim with him, who right soon grew to be most gentle of manner in all service to the king; wherefore began many of the king's men to envy him.

CHAPTER IV. THORGRIM WOOETH OLOF SUNBEAM.

THE tale tells, that on a time the king went a-guesting to a man named Sigurd, and the feast was well arrayed with all things needful: and the king bade Thorgrim stand forth that day, and pour out for him and his chosen friends. Now many men misliked the great honour in which

Viglund
the Fair

the king held Thorgrim: and Sigurd had a kinsman called Grim, a man wealthy of money; a man of such dignity, that he accounted all men nought beside him: this man was at the feast, and sat on the dais at the higher bench. So Thorgrim served that day; and as he bare a great beaker of drink before Grim, the liquor was spilt out of it because Thorgrim stumbled, and it fell on Grim's raiment. He grew wroth thereat, and sprang up with big words, saying, that it was well seen that the son of a whore was more wont to herding swine, and giving them their wash, than to serving any men of account.

Thorgrim waxed wroth at his words, and drew his sword and thrust him through, and men pulled him dead from under the board. Then Sigurd called on his men and bade them stand up and lay hands on Thorgrim: but the king said: "Nay, Sigurd, do it not! for Grim should fall unatoned because of his word; yet will I atone him with a full weregild, if thou wilt that I deal with the matter as I will: for thus will our friendship be better holden."

So it must be as the king would, and he paid so much money that Sigurd was well content; and the feast wore away, and there is nought more to tell of it.

Then the king went his ways home: and now he bade the great men to him, and first of these Earl Thorir, and Master Ketil of Raum-realm; who now lacked a wife, because Ingibjorg had died in child-bed, when she had borne a daughter, who was called Ingibjorg after her mother: but after these the king bade many men and a great company, for there was no lack of all things needful.

So men came as they were bidden to the feast; and Olof Sunbeam came thereto with her father. So men were marshalled to their seats and noble drink was borne forth.

Thorgrim went a-serving, and folk heeded much what a sprightly and goodly man he was: he was seemly clad, for the king honoured him exceedingly, and that misliked many of his men, and they hated Thorgrim therefor; and a byname was given him, and he was called Thorgrim the Proud.

But when Thorgrim saw Olof his heart yearned toward

her, and even so it fared with her toward him, for she loved Thorgrim him; but folk noted it not, though as time served them they met together, and either was well-liking to other: so Thorgrim asked her how she would answer if he bade her in wedlock; and she said that for her part she would not gainsay it, if her father would have it so. So at the end of the feast Thorgrim set forth his wooing and craved Olof Sunbeam. Earl Thorir was not swift in assenting thereto, and they parted with so much done.

CHAPTER V. THE WEDDING OF OLOF SUN-BEAM.

ALITTLE after Thorgrim gat speech of the king, and craved leave to go see Earl Thorir, and the king granted the same; and when Thorgrim came to Earl Thorir's he had good welcome there.

Then again Thorgrim fell to his wooing, and would now know for sure what answer the earl would give; but the earl said he would not wed his daughter to him.

Thorgrim was there three nights, and he and Olof met lovingly; and some folk say that at that tide they plighted their troth. And so Thorgrim went back to the king for that time.

Now he went on warfare, and was fully come to man's estate; so he was a-warring through the summer, and was accounted the stoutest of men in all dangers, and he gat to him in this journey both riches and renown.

But after these things it befell that Ketil of Raumarik came a-riding to Earl Thorir's with thirty men, and King Harald also was a-guesting there. Then Ketil fell a-wooing Olof Sunbeam to wed her, and with the furtherance of the king Earl Thorir gave his daughter Olof to Ketil: but Olof neither said yea thereto nor thought it in her heart: and when the betrothals were to be fulfilled she sang a stave:

“Sure glad ring-warder singeth
Sweeter than any other;

Viglund
the Fair

O Voice amid Earth's voices
Henceforth but woe unto me!
No ring-warder so white is
That he may win look from me:
One man have I made oath for,
And well-beloved is he."

Now most men held it for sooth that Olof had been fain to wed Thorgrim, but it behoved to go the other way.

So the day was appointed whereon the wedding was to be, and that was at winter-nights in the house of Earl Thorir: so wore away the summer.

But in the autumn came Thorgrim back from warfare, and heard that Olof was betrothed; so he went straightway to the king, and craved help of him to get the woman, whether Earl Thorir liked it better or worse, or Ketil either. But the king utterly gainsayed all help to Thorgrim, saying that Ketil was his best friend.

"And I will give thee this counsel," said the king, "that thou raise no strife with Ketil: I will woo Ingibiorg his daughter for thee, and in such wise shall ye make good peace between you!"

Thorgrim said he would not have it so: "I will hold," says he, "to my words, and the oaths that Olof and I swore betwixt us; and her will I have or no woman else. And since thou wilt help me not, I will serve thee no longer."

Said the king: "Thou must even rule the matter as thou wilt; but methinks it is most like that thy honour shall wax no greater in another place than with me."

So Thorgrim took leave of the king, and the king gave him a gold ring at parting which weighed a mark; and so he went to his own men.

Now it lacked three nights of the wedding-day; so Thorgrim went up a-land alone for any of his own men, and went till he came to the house of Earl Thorir.

Thither he came by then that the bride was set on the bench; and all the drinking-hall was full of men, and the

king was set in the high-seat, and the feast was at its full height. The Wedding

So Thorgrim went into the drinking-hall, yea, unto the midst of the floor, and stood there; and so many lights were there in the hall, that no shadow fell from aught. All men knew Thorgrim, and to many, forsooth, he was no unwelcome guest. of Olof Sunbeam

So he spake: "Hast thou, Ketil, wooed and won Olof?"

Ketil said that so it was.

"Was it aught with her assent?" said he.

Says Ketil: "I am minded to think that Earl Thorir might give his daughter away himself, and that the match so made would be lawful forsooth."

"This is my word," says Thorgrim, "that Olof and I have sworn oath each to each that she should have no man but me. Let her say if it be so."

And Olof said it was true.

"Then meseemeth the woman is mine," said Thorgrim.

"Thou shalt never have her," said Ketil. "I have striven with greater men than thou, and prevailed against them."

Said Thorgrim: "Well, meseems thou dost these things in trust of the king's furtherance; so here I bid thee to holm. Let us fight it out, and he shall have the woman who winneth her on holm."

"Nay, I am minded to make the most of it that I have more men than thou," said Ketil.

But lo, while they were a-talking thus, all lights died out throughout the hall, and there was mighty uproar and jostling; but when lights were brought again the bride was gone, and Thorgrim withal; and all men deemed it clear that he had brought it about: and true it was that Thorgrim had taken the bride and brought her to his ship. His men had made all ready even as he had aforetime appointed them, and now they were arrayed for sea; so they hoisted sail as soon as Thorgrim was ready, for the wind blew from off the land.

These things befell in the thick of the land-settling-time

Viglund
the Fair

of Iceland; and Thorgrim thought sure enough that he might not hold himself in Norway after this business: so he made for Iceland. They put forth into the sea and had a fair wind, and made Snowfellness, and went a-land at Hraunhaven.

But the king and the earl heard of Thorgrim's journey, and Ketil was deemed to have won the greatest shame, in that he had lost his wife, and it was not well seen that he would have right of Thorgrim. The king made Thorgrim an outlaw for this deed at Ketil's urging: but turn we from these a while.

CHAPTER VI. OF KETILRID AND HER KIN.

THERE was a man named Holmkel, who dwelt at Foss on Snowfellness, by Holmkel's River: he had to wife Thorbiorg, the daughter of Einar of Bath-brent, and they had two sons together, one named Jokul and the other Einar. Holmkel was the son of Alfarin, who was the son of Vali; his brothers were Ingiald of Ingialdsknoll, and Hauskuld of Hauskuldstead, and Goti of Gotisbrook.

So Thorgrim the Proud bought the lands of Ingialdsknoll, and Ingiald on the other hand went a-trading, and comes not into our tale. Thorgrim soon became a great chieftain, and a most bounteous man; and he got to be great friends with Holmkel of Foss.

Now tells the tale that he made a wedding for Olof, and the winter after they set up house at Ingialdsknoll Olof bore a child, a man-child that had to name Trusty; the next winter she bore another boy, who was called Viglund, and he soon grew both strong and fair.

The same year Thorbiorg bore a woman-child, and it was named Ketilrid; so she and Viglund were of an age: but Trusty was one winter older.

So they grew up in that country, and all would be saying thereabout that there was neither man nor maid of fairer promise or of better conditions in all things than were Viglund and Ketilrid.

Holmkel loved his daughter so much that he would do nought against her will, but Thorbiorg loved her little.

Now whenas Viglund was ten and Trusty eleven winters Of Ketil-
old, there were none of that age as strong as they in all the rid and
country side, and Viglund was the stronger; their other con- her kin
ditions were according to this, and moreover Thorgrim
spared in nought to teach his sons.

But Thorbiorg of Foss would learn her daughter no skill,
and Holmkel thought it great pity of that; so he took the
rede at last to ride to Ingialdsknoll with his daughter; and
Thorgrim greeted him well, for great was the friendship
between them. Holmkel was seeking fostering there for his
daughter with Olof, that she might teach her skill, for Olof
was accounted the most skilled of all women of Iceland; she
took her rejoicing and got to love her exceeding well.

By this had Olof a young daughter named Helga, a year
younger than Ketilrid; and so these young folk drew to-
gether in all joyance and glee: but in all games betwixt them
it ever so befell that Viglund and Ketilrid would fall into
company together, and the brother and sister Trusty and
Helga. And now great love grew up between Viglund and
Ketilrid, and many would be saying that it would make an
even match for many causes. But ever when they were to-
gether would either gaze at other and turn to nought else.
And on a time Viglund spoke and said that he was fain they
should bind their love with oath and troth; but Ketilrid was
slow thereover.

Said she: "There are many things against it: first, that
thou mayest not be in the same mind when thou art fully
come to man's estate; for about such things are ye men's
minds nought steadfast. And again, it is not meet, neither
will I have it, that we go against my father's counsels herein.
And a third thing I see that may fret it all away is, that I am
of no might in my matters; for so it is that these things go
mostly after my mother's will, and she has little love for me:
yet, indeed, I know none that I would rather have than thee,
if I might rule matters; but my heart tells me that troubles
great and sore lie in the way of it, however it may be in the
end."

Full oft got Viglund's talk on to the same road, and ever

Viglund
the Fair

she answered in like wise; and yet men deem indeed that they must have sworn troth each to each.

CHAPTER VII. THOSE BRETHREN OF FOSS COME TO INGIALDSKNOLL.

NOW must we tell of the brethren Jokul and Einar, how they became exceeding ill-ruled in the country-side, treading herein in the footsteps of their mother. Holmkel was ill-content therewith, but might not better it, and they got to be hated because of their goings on.

Now on a time Einar fell to speech with his mother, and said: "I am ill-content with the honour Thorgrim the Proud has in the country-side; and I am minded to try if I may not do my will on Olof his wife; and then it would either be that he would strive to avenge it, or else would his honour lie alow: neither is it all so sure that he would get the better of it, if he strove to get the thing avenged."

She said it was well spoken and just her very mind. So on a certain day, when Holmkel was from home, rode Einar to Ingialdsknoll, and Jokul his brother with him.

Olof the good-wife had bidden a home-woman of hers to lock the men's door every morning whenas the men were gone to work; and in such wise did she the morning those twain came to the stead. So the home-woman was ware of their coming, and went to Olof's bedchamber and told her that the Foss-dwellers were come thither. So Olof arose and clad herself, and went to her sewing-bower, and set down on the dais there a handmaiden, casting her own mantle over her, and saying: "Take it nought strange though they think thee to be me, and I shall look to it that thou get no shame of them."

Therewith she sent another home-woman to the door, for there was no man in the house. So Einar asked where Olof was, and it was told him that she was in her sewing-bower. Thither turned both those brethren, and when they came into the chamber, they beheld how Olof sat on the dais; so Einar sat down by her and began his talk with her.

But therewith came one into the hall clad in blue and with a drawn sword in hand, not great of growth, but exceeding wroth of aspect.

They asked of his name, and he called himself Ottar; they knew him not, and yet they waxed somewhat adrad of the man.

Now he took up the word and spake: "All must out, and welcome home Thorgrim the goodman, who is a-riding to the garth." Then up sprang the brethren, and went out, and beheld where the goodman rode with a great company; so they leapt on their horses and rode away home.

But it turned out that that great company was but the beasts being driven home; yea, and the blue-clad man was even Olof herself: and when the Foss-folk knew that, they thought their journey but pitiful: so ever waxed great hatred betwixt the houses.

But when goodman Thorgrim came home Olof told him all that was befallen, and he spake: "Let us tell nought here-of abroad, because of Holmkel my friend: for Einar did it not with his consenting."

CHAPTER VIII. OF A HORSEFIGHT.

NOW those brethren had a stallion, brown of colour and a savage beast; every horse he dealt with he drave away: and two tusks he had, so huge that they were like no teeth of horses. Viglund also had a stallion, light-dun of colour, the best and fairest of horses, and held of great account amongst them. Thorgrim the Proud withal had two oxen, blaze-faced, and with horns like polished bone, and these oxen he liked well.

Now on a day the brethren Einar and Jokul rode to Ingialdsknoll, and there found the father and sons all three standing without the door: so Jokul asked Viglund to give him his light-dun horse. Viglund said he had scarce made up his mind to that; then said Jokul that it was niggardly done: but Viglund said he took no keep thereof.

"Then let us fight the horses," said Jokul.

Those
Brethren
of Foss
come to
Ingialds-
knoll

Viglund
the Fair

"That meseems may be," quoth Viglund.

"And that," said Jokul, "I deem better than the gift of thine to me."

"Good," says Viglund; "let the thing go as it will."

Therewith they appoint a day for the horsefight. So when the day was come the brown of those brethren was led forth, and devilish was his demeanour; so both the brethren got ready to follow him. Then in came Viglund's light-dun, and when he came into the ring he went about circling, till he reared up and smote both his forefeet on the brown's muzzle so that the tusks were driven from out him; thereafter he made at the brown with his teeth, and smote him in the belly, and tore him through, and the brown fell down dead. But when the Foss-folk saw that, they ran to their weapons, and so did the others, and there they fought till Holmkel and Thorgrim gat them parted; and by then was fallen one man of Viglund's, but two of the brethren's men; and in such wise men departed.

But still held the friendship between Holmkel and Thorgrim; and Holmkel withal got to know of the love between Ketilrid and Viglund, and did nought to hinder it: but Thorbiorg and her sons were exceeding ill-content therewith.

So wore away the time, till it was the talk of all men, that none of that day in Iceland were as fair as Viglund and Ketilrid, or as good in all skill and courtesy.

CHAPTER IX. EVIL DEEDS OF THOSE BRETHREN.

THE tale tells, that on a time those brethren, Einar and Jokul, went from home a night-tide when it was bright and clear, and came to the fell-common whereas dwelt Viglund's light-dun: they went up to the horses and would drive them home, but might not in anywise, for the dun warded the horses from their driving, but they had been minded to drive all the horses about him to impound him.

So when they might not bring it about they waxed exceed-

ing wroth, and set on the stallion with weapons to slay him; but he defended himself with hoofs and teeth so mightily, that the night was far spent and nothing done: but it came to pass in the end that they got within spear-thrust of him and slew him so. Evil deeds of those Brethen

But when they had done it they were loth to drive the horses home, for they deemed that then it would be clearly seen that they had slain the stallion, and they were fain to hide the same; so they dragged him over a shear rock, with the intent that it should be thought that he had tumbled over of himself: then they fared home, and made as if nought had happened.

Again a little after went the brethren Einar and Jokul to a hill-common of Thorgrim the Proud wherein went his gelded beasts: and there had he a herd of fifty oxen.

So the brethren knew the goodly blaze-faced oxen, and took them and cast halters over them and led them along to Foss, and there slew them both, and then went and hung them up in an outhouse. This was a-night time, and they had made an end of their work before the home-men arose.

Their mother knew all about it, and was, forsooth, exceeding busy in helping her sons over this work of theirs.

CHAPTER X. HOLMKEL RIDES TO INGIALDS-KNOLL.

NOW must it be told, how that the brethren, Viglund and Trusty, went one day to their horses; and when they came to the hill-common to them, they missed their stallion, and, seeking him far and wide, found him at last stark dead under a great cliff; many and great wounds they found on him, and he had been thrust clean through.

So Viglund and his brother thought it clear that the Foss-folk had done it; so they went home and told how their horse was dead, and how it must have been done by the Foss-folk.

Thorgrim bade them keep it quiet; says he, "They were the first to lose their horse; and ye will have your turn again, if things go as I deem, even though ye let this pass over."

Viglund
the Fair

So for that time they let it pass at first : but not long after Thorgrim was told that his goodly blaze-faced oxen were gone, even those that he held in most account, and withal that folk deemed it the work of men.

Thorgrim made few words thereover, but said that it was most like that thieves who dwelt abroad in the mountains would have done such a deed ; neither did he let any search be made for the oxen.

So this was heard far and wide, and men deemed that those of Ingialdsknoll had great scathe hereby.

Thorbiorg of Foss made plentiful mocking about this, and let eat the slaughtered oxen : but when goodman Holmkel came to know where the oxen were gotten to, he takes his horse and rides off to Ingialdsknoll : but when he finds goodman Thorgrim he tells him that he thinks his goodly oxen have gotten to his house, and that his sons must have done it. "And now," says he, "I will pay for the oxen out and out, even as much as thou thyself wilt, if thou bring not their guilt home to them by law."

Thorgrim says that so it shall be ; and so he took as much money as made him well content, and he and Holmkel parted with great friendship.

CHAPTER XI. THE BREWING OF A WITCH-STORM.

A WOMAN named Kiolvor dwelt at Hraunskard, a great witch-wife of very ill conditions and hateful to all folk ; and there was great friendship between her and Thorbiorg of Foss. So the mother and sons, Thorbiorg to wit, Einar and Jokul, bargained with Kiolvor and gave her a hundred in silver, so that she should overcome those brethren, Viglund and Trusty, by some such manner of witchcraft as she might see her way to. For the greatest envy beat about the hearts of these ; and they had heard withal of the true love of Viglund and Ketilrid, and grudged that they should have joy one of the other, as was well proven afterwards.

But they twain loved ever hotter and hotter, with secret love and desire enfolded in their breasts, even from the time they first grew up ; so that the roots of love and the waxing of desire were never torn up from the hearts of them ; even as the nature of love is, that the fire of longing and flame of desire burneth ever the hotter, and knitteth the more together the breast and heart of the lovers, as folk stand more in the way thereof, as kith and kin cast greater hindrances before those betwixt whom sweet love and yearning lieth. Even so it fared with these folk, Viglund and Ketilrid ; for ever all the days while they both lived they loved so hotly, that neither might look away from the other, from the time they first looked each on each, if they might but do as their hearts' yearning was.

The brew-
ing of a
Witch
Storm

Now there was a man named Biorn, a home-man of Thorgrim the Proud, and he was called Biorn of the Billows, because he was such a sea-dog that he deemed no weather unmeet to put to sea in ; and he would ever say that he heeded nought the idle tricks of the billows. He had come out with Thorgrim, and his business it was to look to his craft ; and there was good fishing off the ness. He never rowed out with more than two men, though he had a stout ten-oared yawl ; but now this autumn it befell by Kiolvor's witchcraft that both his fellows lay sick, and all men else were busy about the hay. So Biorn would row a-fishing, wherefore he bade Viglund and Trusty go with him that day. They did so, because the weather was fair, and they all good friends together. But Kiolvor knew all this, and went up on to her witch-house, and waved her veil out toward the east quarter, and thereby the weather grew thick speedily.

So when they were gotten on to the fishing-banks there was fish enough under them, till they beheld how a cloud-fleck came up from the east and north-east. Then said Viglund : " Meseems it were good to make for land, for I like not the look of the weather. "

Says Biorn : " Nay, let us wait till the ship is laden. "

" Thou shalt be master, " said Viglund.

Viglund
the Fair

Therewith the cloud-fleck drew all over the sky, and brought with it both wind and frost, and such an ill sea, that the waters were nowhere still, but drave about like grains of salt.

And now Biorn said they would make for land. "Better before," said Viglund; "but I will say nought against it now." So Biorn and Trusty rowed, and made no way forward; but they drove south-west out to sea; and the craft began to fill under them.

Then Viglund bade Biorn bale and Trusty steer, but he himself took the oars, and rowed so mightily that they made land at Daymealness. There dwelt Thorkel Skinhood, who came out with Bardi the Snowfell-sprite, and was now old.

Now when it was told Ketilrid that they had been driven out to sea and were dead, she fell into a faint; but when she came to herself she sang this stave as she looked out toward the sea:



No more now may my ey - en



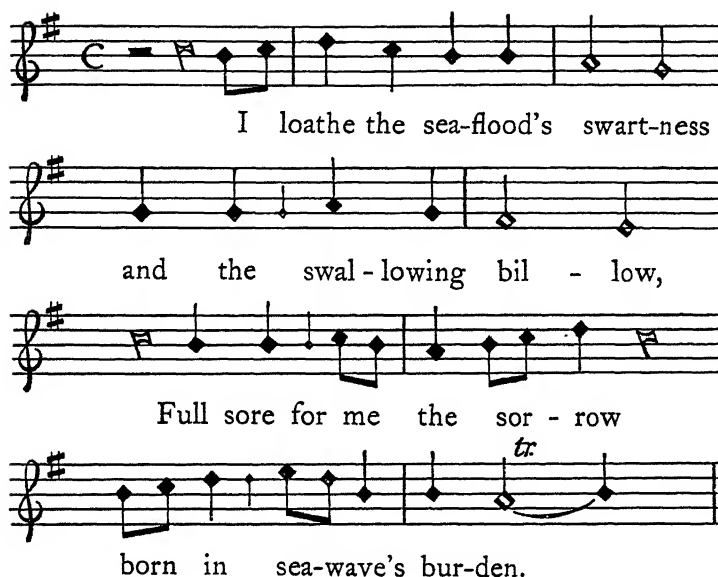
meet the sea un - greet - ing,



Since the day my speech-friend



sank be - low the sea - banks.



But Thorkel gave the brethren a good welcome, and the next day they went home; and sweet and joyful was the meeting betwixt Viglund and Ketilrid.

CHAPTER XII. OF HAKON THE EAST-MAN.

NOW must we take up the story whereas we left it awhile ago; for Ketil Ram was ill-content with such an ending of his case with Thorgrim the Proud; but he was fast getting old now, and he deemed it not easy to get aught done. His sons Sigurd and Gunnlaug were become hardy men and goodly, and Ingibiorg his daughter was the fairest of all women.

Now there was a man named Hakon, a Wick-man of kin, wealthy and warlike: this man went his ways to Ketil of Raum-realm, and craved his daughter in wedlock; and Ketil gave this answer to his asking: "I will give thee my daughter on these wise; thou wilt first fare out to Iceland and slay Thorgrim the Proud, and bring me the head of him."

Viglund
the Fair

Hakon said he thought that no great matter; and so they struck the bargain. Hakon fared to Iceland that summer, and brought his ship into Frodaroyce; and the Foss-folk Jokul and Einar came first to the ship: the ship-master gave them good welcome, and asked them many things; and they were free of tidings to him.

Then he asked concerning lodging, and they said there was none better than at their father's house at Foss.

"A sister we have," said they, "so fair and courteous, that her like is not to be found; and we will do for thee which thou wilt; either give her to thee as a wife, or let thee have her as a concubine: so come, we bid thee thither to guest with us."

The master thought this a thing to be desired, so he said he would go thither; and tells them withal what errand he had in Iceland; and they liked the thing well: and now all bind themselves as fellows in the plot.

A little after went the ship-master home to Foss; forsooth clean against the will of Holmkel the goodman: but so it had to be. In a little while withal the ship-master got to be great friends with Thorbiorg; for he gave her many goodly things.

So on a time this Hakon fell to talk with the mother and sons, and asked where the woman was whereof the brethren had told him; "for I would see her," says he.

They said she was being fostered with Olof at Ingialdsknoll; so he bade them see to it and have her home: "For," said he, "I trust full well to have thy furtherance in the getting of my will of her, because of our friendship."

So a little after this Thorbiorg fell a-talking with goodman Holmkel. "I will," she said, "that my daughter Ketilrid come home to me."

"Well," said the goodman, "I deem it better that she be left in peace where she is gotten to."

"Nay, it shall not be," says she; "rather will I go fetch her myself, than that she should have such rumour from Viglund as now lieth on her: yea, I will rather wed her to Hakon; for that methinks were a seemly match."

Therewith they make an end of talking; and Holmkel

thought he could see, that Thorbiorg would send after Ketilrid, and he deems it better to go fetch her himself. So he rode to Ingialdsknoll, and had good welcome there.

Hakon
the East-
man

But when he was come thither Viglund went to Ketilrid and spake thus with her: "Thy father is come hither; and methinks he is come after thee to bring thee home with him, and he must needs have his will. But now, Ketilrid, I am full fain that thou keep in memory all the privy talk we have had together, for indeed I know that thou wilt never be out of my mind."

Then said Ketilrid, sore weeping: "Long have I seen that we might not long have this joy in peace; and now belike it were better that we had not said so much: but not all so sure it is that thou lovest me better than I love thee; though my words be less than thine. But now herein do I see the redes of my mother; because for a long while I have had but little love of her; and most like it is that the days of our bliss are over and done if she may have her will of me: nevertheless should I be well content if I wist that all went well with thee. But howsoever it be, we shall never come together in bliss, but if the will of my father prevail; and a heavy yoke he has to drive, whereas my mother and brothers are afield, for in all things will they be against me. But thou, let all these things slip from off thee!"

Then went Viglund to Ketilrid and kissed her; and it was easily seen of her, yea and of both of them, how hard it was for them to part as at that time.

Moreover, Viglund sang a stave:

"Young now I shall not ever
Love any silken goddess,
That son of man shall say it,
Save thee alone, O Sweetling!
Therefore fair maid, remember
The oath we swore aforetime,
Howso that woman wilful
Would waste the love between us."

Then Ketilrid went into the house of her father, who

Viglund
the Fair

straightway told her that she must away home with him. Ketilrid says that he must have his will; "But good," says she, "would I deem it to abide here ever: yet must it be even as it must."

A great matter it was to all to part with Ketilrid, for she was a joy to the heart of every man.

But now they ride home to Foss: and the ship-master was wondrous fain of her coming home: but Thorbiorg her mother appointed her to serve Hakon; which thing she would in nowise do, but told her father thereof weeping; and he said: "Thou shalt not serve Hakon but if thou wilt: yea that alone shalt thou do which thou wilt, and thou shalt be by me both day and night."

She said she was right glad of that: and so the time wore away a space, in such wise that Hakon got never a word with her.

CHAPTER XIII. BALL-PLAY ON ESJA-TARN.

NOW was ball-play set up on Esja-tarn, and the Foss-men were the setters forth of the sport: and the first day when men came home from these games, Ketilrid asked if none had come thither from Ingialdsknoll; and she was told that they had all been there, both the father and sons, and Olof and her daughter Helga: so Ketilrid craved of her father next day that she might go to the play; he said yea thereto; and so they went all together that day, and great was the glee: for Thorgrim's sons were come and none other from Ingialdsknoll.

So the brethren went up on to the bank whereas the women sat; and Ketilrid stood up to meet them, and greeted them lovingly, and they sat down on either hand of her, Viglund and Trusty.

Then spake Ketilrid: "Now will I be just as kind to one of you as the other, and hoodwink folk thereby."

Therewith she gazed ever on Viglund and said: "Thy name will I lengthen this day, and call thee Viglund the FAIR: and this ring I will give thee, which my father gave

me as a tothing-token, and it shall be to thee a naming-token."

Ball-play
on Esja-
Tarn

So he took the ring and drew it on to his hand; and gave her again the ring Harald's-gift, for his father had given it to him. And so, long was their talk drawn out: but when the Foss-men saw that, they took it sore to heart.

So either fare home that evening; and Hakon fell to speech with Thorbiorg, and bade her forbid her daughter to go to any more such meetings of men-folk, in such a mood as she was. She assented thereto, and told Holmkel the goodman not to let his daughter go to any play; but let her abide at home in peace rather: and he did so, and Ketilrid's gladness departed from her. Then her father said, she should be ever by him at home if she thought it better so; and she said it pleased her well.

But men go to the play as aforetime; and one had one side, one the other in the play, the Foss-folk and Thorgrim's sons. And on a time Viglund drave the ball out beyond Jokul. Jokul waxed wroth thereat, and when he got the ball, he took it and drave it into Viglund's face, so hard that the skin of his brow fell down over his eyes. Then Trusty ripped a rag from his shirt, and bound up his brother's brow, and when that was done the Foss-folk were departed.

So the brethren went home; and when they came into the hall, Thorgrim cried out as he sat on the dais, "Welcome, dear son and daughter!"

"Why dost thou make women of us, father?" said Trusty.

"Belike," said Thorgrim, "a coif-wearer should be a woman."

"No woman am I," said Viglund. "Yet may happen I am not so far short of it."

"Why didst thou not pay Jokul back?" said Thorgrim.

"They were gone," said Trusty, "by then I had bound up his face." And so the talk came to an end.

The next day both the brethren went to the play; and so when it was least to be looked for, Viglund drave the ball

Viglund
the Fair

right into Jokul's face, so that the skin burst. Then Jokul went to smite Viglund with his bat, but Viglund ran in under the blow and cast Jokul down on the ice, so that he lay long swooning; and therewith were they parted, and either side went home. Jokul had no might to get a-horseback, and was borne home betwixt the four corners of a cloth: but he mended speedily, and the play was set up at Foss. So Thorgrim's sons arrayed them for the play. Thorgrim would have stayed them, saying that he deemed sore troubles would come of it; but they went none the less.

So when they came into the hall at Foss the play was begun, but folk were all in their seats in the hall. So Viglund went in and up to the dais, whereon sat the goodman and his daughter; and Ketilrid greeted him well.

He took her up from her seat, and sat himself down therein, and set her on his knee. But when the goodman saw that, he edged away and gave place, and then Ketilrid sat her down between them, and they fell to talk together.

Then let the goodman get them a pair of tables, and there they played daylong.

Hakon was ill at ease at that; and ever that winter had he been talking to goodman Holmkel and craving his daughter; but Holmkel answered ever in one wise, and said it might not be.

So wore the day till the brethren got them ready to go; but when they were on the causeway, lo, Ketilrid was in the path before them, and bade them not fare home that night. "Because," quoth she, "I know that my brethren will waylay you."

But Viglund said he would go as he had been minded afore, and they did so; and each of them had his axe in his hand. But when they came to a certain stackgarth, lo the Foss-folk, twelve in company.

Then said Jokul: "Good that we have met, Viglund; now shall I pay thee back for stroke of ball and felling on the ice."

"I have nought to blame my luck herein," said Viglund.

So they fell on the two brethren, who defended themselves well and manly. Viglund fought no great while before he had slain a man, and then another, and Trusty slew a third.

Ball-play
on Esja-
Tarn

Then said Jokul: "Now let us hold our hands, and lay all these feuds on those brethren."

So did they, and either side went their ways home; and Jokul tells his father that Viglund and Trusty had slain three of his home-men. "But we," quoth he, "would do nought against them till we had seen thee."

Now Holmkel was exceeding wroth at this tale.

CHAPTER XIV. KETILRID BETROTHED TO HAKON.

JOKUL kept on egging his father to wed Ketilrid his daughter to Hakon; so, what with the urging of those brethren, Holmkel did betroth her to him, but utterly against her will. Hakon was well minded to abide in Iceland, whereas he saw he could not bring to pass the slaying of Thorgrim the Proud.

So this was heard of at Ingialdsknoll, and Viglund took it much to heart.

But when Holmkel knew the very sooth about the way-laying of the brethren, he deemed he had done overmuch in giving Ketilrid to Hakon.

Now still came the sons of Thorgrim to the games at Foss as heretofore; and Viglund had speech of Ketilrid, and blamed her much with hard words in that she was betrothed. But when they arrayed them to go that night, lo, Hakon had vanished, and the sons of Holmkel, and many others with them. Then spake the goodman with Viglund: "I would," said he, "that ye went not home to-night: for meseemeth the departure of those brethren looks untrustworthy."

But Viglund said he would go, as he had afore been minded: but when they came out a-doors, there was Ketilrid in the way before them, who prayed Viglund to go another road. "No great things will I do for thy word," said he; and he sang withal:

Viglund
the Fair

“Stem where the gathered gold meets,
All trust I gave unto thee:
Last thought of all thoughts was it
That thou couldst wed another.
But now no oaths avail us,
Nought are our many kisses;
Late learn we of women:
Her word to me is broken.”

“I think not that I have done any such thing,” said Ketil-rid; “but indeed I would that thou wentest not!”

“It shall not be,” said Viglund; “for I have more mind to try the matter out with Hakon, than to let him cast his arms about thee, while I am alive to see it.” And he sang:

“I would abide the bale-fire,
Or bear the steel-tree’s smiting,
As other men may bear it;
But heavy maidens’ redes are:
Sorely to me it seemeth,
Gold spoilers’ shoulder-branches,
The sweet that was my maiden
Other than mine entwining.”

CHAPTER XV. THE BATTLE OF THE FOSS-FOLK AND THORGRIM’S SONS.

SO they went on their way till they came to the stack-garth, whereas they had had to do before: and there were the Foss-folk, twelve in company.

Then the sons of Thorgrim gat them up on to the hay which was in the garth, so that the others were not ware of them, till they had torn up great store of the frozen turf.

But when they had so done, they saw Thorgrim’s sons, and fell on them, and there befell the fiercest of fights: till the Foss-folk saw that they made way slowly against Thorgrim’s sons whiles they were up on the hay: then cried Jokul:

“Thou wert well counselled, Viglund, not to slink away; and we shall hold for certain that thou art no good man and true, but if thou come down from the hay there, and try the matter to its end.”

So, because of Jokul's egging on, Viglund leapt down from the hay with Trusty his brother, and they met fiercely; and all the men of Hakon and those brethren fell, so that of the Foss-dwellers these alone stood on their feet, Jokul, Einar, and Hakon, with two men more who were hurt and unmeet for fight.

Thus said Jokul: “Now let us set to work in manly and generous wise; let Trusty and Einar fight together, and Viglund and Hakon, and I will sit beside the while.”

Now Trusty was both sore and weary; and they fought, Trusty and Einar, till either fell.

Then fell to fight Viglund and Hakon; and Viglund was exceeding weary, but unwounded.

The fight was both hard and long, because Hakon was strong and stout-hearted, but Viglund strong of hand, and skilled in arms and eager of heart: but the end of their dealings was, that Hakon fell dead to earth, while Viglund was sore hurt.

Then up sprung Jokul, fresh, and without a hurt, and turned against Viglund, and they fell to fight: and a long space they fought, and hard enow, till none could see which would win the day; when Viglund sees that it is a hard matter to prevail against Jokul to the end because of his wounds and weariness; and so being as good with one hand as the other, he cast aloft axe and shield, and caught his shield with his right hand and his axe with his left, in such wise that Jokul noted it not, and then smote the right arm from off him at the crook of the elbow. Then Jokul took to flight, nor might Viglund follow after him; but he caught up a spear from the ground, whereas many lay beside him, and cast it after Jokul; and that spear smote him, and went in at the shoulders and out at the breast of him; and Jokul fell down dead.

Battle
of the
Foss-folk
and Thor-
grim's
sons

Viglund
the Fair

But Viglund was grown faint with the flow of blood, and he fell swooning and lay there as one dead.

Then the two Foss-men who were left, crawled away to their horses and rode home to Foss, and got into the hall; and there sat the goodman, with his wife on one side and his daughter on the other: then they tell out the tidings: that Hakon is fallen and the brethren, and seven other men besides, and the sons of Thorgrim withal.

When Ketilrid heard that, she fell fainting, and when she came to herself, her mother laid heavy words on her. "Now," quoth she, "is thy light-o'-love well seen, and the desire thou hadst toward Viglund: good it is that ye must needs be parted now."

Then said the goodman: "Why must thou needs turn this blame on her? She loved her brethren so well, that she may well be astonished at hearing of their fall."

"Maybe that it is so," said Thorbiorg; "yet surely I think not. But now the business in hand is to gather a company of men and go slay Thorgrim the Proud, as swiftly as may be."

"Yea, is that our due business?" said Holmkel. "Me-seems he at least is sackless of the slaying of those brethren; and as for his sons, they can lose no more than their lives; and soothly, it was but their due to defend themselves."

CHAPTER XVI. KETIL'S SONS COME OUT TO ICELAND.

NOW Viglund and Trusty lay among the slain, till Viglund came to himself, and sought after his brother, and found there was yet life in him; wherefore he was minded to do what he might for him there, for he looked not to be of might to bear him to a dwelling: but now he heard the sound of ice breaking on the way, and lo, their father coming with a sledge. So Thorgrim brought Trusty into the sledge and drave him home to Ingialdsknoll; but Viglund rode unholpen. So he set them into an earth-dug house under his bed, and there Olof awaited them and

bound their wounds: there they abode privily, and were Ketil's
fully healed in the end; though they lay full a twelvemonth sons come
wounded. out to

Holmkel let set his sons in mound, and those men who Iceland
had fallen with them, and that place is now called Mound-
knowes.

These things were now told of far and wide, and all
thought it great tidings, deeming it well-nigh sooth that
Thorgrim's sons were slain.

Thorgrim and Holmkel met, nor did this matter depart
their friendship, and they made peace on such terms that the
case should not be brought to law or judgment. But when
Thorbiorg wist thereof, she sent privily to her father Einar,
and bade him take up the feud after her sons; and follow up
the sons of Thorgrim for full penalty, if yet they lived: and
albeit Einar were old, yet he threw himself into this case,
and beguiled the sons of Thorgrim to the full at the Thors-
ness-thing.

And all this came home to the ears of the country-side.

Now Hakon's shipmates sailed away in the summer when
they were ready, and made Norway, and coming to Ketil
told him throughout how all things had gone: wherefore it
seemed to him that the revenge on Thorgrim and his sons
was like to be tardy. Gunnlaug and Sigurd, the sons of Ke-
til, were come from a viking cruise in those days, and were
grown most famous men: Gunnlaug the Masterful had
sworn this oath, never to deny to any man a berth in his ship,
if so be his life lay thereon; and Sigurd the Sage had sworn
never to reward good with evil.

So Ketil told his sons of the fall of Hakon, and bade them
fare to Iceland and revenge his shame, and slay Thorgrim
the Proud.

They came into this tardily, yet for the prayer's sake of
their father they went; but as soon as they came into the
main sea there drave a storm down on them, and a mighty
wind, and they weltered about right up to winter-nights.

Viglund
the Fair

They came on Snowfellness amidst a great fog, and struck on Onverdaness, and were wrecked; so all men got a-land alive, but of the goods was little saved.

Now Thorgrim heard hereof, and who the men were, and rode to meet them, and bade them home to him with all their men; and they took that joyfully, and abode there the winter through.

And now Sigurd began to think much of Helga, though he said but little to her.

And they knew nought of Thorgrim's sons.

But on a time got Gunnlaug a-talking with Sigurd his brother, and said, "Were it not meet that we should seek revenge on Thorgrim, for certes we may have a right good chance against him?"

Sigurd answered: "It had been better unspoken; for thus meseems should I reward good with evil, if I were to slay the man who has taken me from shipwreck; and in every wise doth better and better to me: nay, rather would I defend him than do him a mischief if it should come to such a pass."

So they made an end of talking, and Gunnlaug never got on this talk again with Sigurd. So the winter wears, and those brethren let array their ship, being desirous to be ready to depart against summer-tide.

And some men would be saying that things went sweetly between Helga and Sigurd; howbeit, it was scarce known openly to all folk.

CHAPTER XVII. THE PARTING OF VIGLUND AND KETILRID.

NOW turns the tale to Earl Eric, who became an old man, and died of eld; but Sigmund his son took his possessions after him, but gat no dignity from King Harald, because the king bore all the kin of Thorgrim something of a grudge for his friendship's sake with Ketil.

Helgi had wedded in Norway, but his wife was dead before the tale gets so far as this: he had a daughter called Ragnhild, the fairest of women. So Helgi was weary of Norway, and

went to Iceland, and came thither late in the land-settling time, and bought land in Gautwick of that Gaut who had settled the land there; and there he dwelt till old age.

Parting of
Viglund
& Ketilrid

Now tells the tale of more folk: Steinolf, to wit, who dwelt in Hraundale, who had a son hight Thorleif, a big man and a proper. This Thorleif wooed Ketilrid, but she would nought of him. Then Thorleif made many words about it, to the end that he should get her, howsoever she might gainsay it; and Thorbiorg was utterly of his way of thinking.

But now, when Thorgrim's sons were clean healed of their hurts, they asked their father what he would counsel them to do. He said, "I deem it good rede for you to take berth in the ship of the brethren Gunnlaug and Sigurd, and pray a passage of them over the Iceland sea, saying that your lives lie thereon, as the sooth is, keeping your names hidden meanwhile. Then shall Sigurd keep to his oath, and grant you passage: for this Sigurd is a good man and true, and ye will get but good at his hands: and soothly ye will need it, for over there ye will have to answer for me."

So it was settled that this was to be done. Men say that Ketilrid was weighed down with sorrow that winter; that oft she slept little, and sat awake in her sewing-bower night-long. But that same night before the day whenas Viglund should fare to the ship, for now Ketil's sons were all ready for sea, Viglund and Trusty went to Foss, and into the chamber whereas sat Ketilrid awake, while her handmaids slept.

Sweetly she welcomed the brethren. "It is long since we met," said she; "but right good it is that ye are whole and about on your feet again."

So the two brethren sat down beside her, and talked a long while; and Viglund told her all he was minded to do, and she was glad thereat.

"All is right well," she said, "so long as thou art well, howsoever it fare with me."

"Let thyself not be wedded whiles I am away," said Viglund.

"My father must rule that," she said, "for I have no might

Viglund herein; moreover, I will not be against him: but belike it will
the Fair be no happier for me than for thee, if things go otherwise:
yet all must needs go its own ways."

Then Viglund bade her cut his hair and wash his head, and she did so; and when it was done, Viglund said: "This I swear, that none shall cut my hair or wash my head but thou only while thou art alive."

Then they all went out together, and parted without in the home-mead: and Viglund kissed Ketilrid weeping sore; and it was well seen of them, that their hearts were sore to part thus: but so must it be: and she went into her bower, but they went on their way.

And Viglund, or ever he parted from Ketilrid, sang this stave:

"Maiden, my songs remember,
Fair mouth, if thou mayst learn them;
For, clasp-mead, they may gain thee
At whiles some times beguiling.
Most precious, when thou wendest
Abroad, where folk are gathered,
Me, O thou slender isle-may,
Each time shalt thou remember."

But when they were come a little way from the garth Viglund sang another stave:

"Amid the town we twain stood,
And there she wound around me
Her hands, the hawk-eyed woman,
The fair-haired, greeting sorely.
Fast fell tears from the maiden,
And sorrow told of longing;
Her cloth the drift-white dear one
Over bright brows was drawing."

A little after, when Ketilrid came into her bower, thither came the goodman Holmkel, and saw his daughter weeping

sorely: then he asked her why she was so sleepless: but for all answer she sang:

Parting of
Viglund
& Ketilrid

“A little way I led him,
The lord of sheen, from green garth;
But farther than all faring,
My heart it followeth after.
Yea, longer had I led him,
If land lay off the haven,
And all the waste of Ægir
Were into green meads waxen.”

Then spake Ketilrid and answered her father: “My brothers’ death was in my mind.”

“Wilt thou have them avenged?” said he.

“That should be soon seen,” she said, “if I were as much a man and of might in matters, as I am now but a woman.”

The goodman said: “Daughter, know in good sooth, that it is for thy sake that I have done nought against those brethren; for I wot well that they are alive: so come now, hide not from me how thou wouldst have the matter go; for I will get them slain if that is thy will.”

“So far from having them slain,” said she, “if I might rule, I would never have made them outlaws if I might have ruled; and, moreover, I would have given them money for their journey if I had had it; and never would I have any other but Viglund, if I might choose.”

Then Holmkel arose and went forth, and took his horse and rode after the brethren. But when they saw him, then said Trusty, “There rideth Holmkel alone; and if thou wilt get Ketilrid, there is one thing to be done—nought good though it be—to slay Holmkel and carry off Ketilrid.”

Said Viglund: “Though it were on the board that I should never see Ketilrid from this time henceforward, yet rather would I have it so than that I do Holmkel any hurt, and forget the trustiness he hath dealt me withal, when he hath such sorrow to pay me back for: yea, moreover, Ketilrid hath

Viglund
the Fair

grief enow to bear though she see not her father slain, who hath ever wished all things good for her."

"Yea, so it is best," said Trusty.

"Now shall we," said Viglund, "ride into our home-mead to meet him, for the increasing of his honour."

They did so; but Holmkel rode on past them and then turned back: so the brethren went back to the road, and found money there, and a gold ring, and a rune-staff: and on the rune-staff were cut all those words of Ketilrid and Holmkel, and this withal, that she gave that money to Viglund.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE SONS OF THORGRIM FARE OUT FROM ICELAND.

THEREAFTER they went to the ship, and Gunnlaug and his brother were ready for sea, and the wind blowing off shore: so Viglund hailed the ship, and asked whether Gunnlaug were aboard, and whether he would give them passage over the Iceland seas. He asked who they were: they said one was named Troubleman, and the other Hardfellow. Then Gunnlaug asked what dragged them toward the outlands; and they said, very fear for their lives. So he bade them come out to the ship, and they did so. Then they hoisted sail, and sailed out to sea; and when they had made some way Gunnlaug said, "Big fellow, why art thou named Troubleman?"

"Well," said he, "I am called Troubleman, because I have troubles enough and to spare of my own; but I am also called Viglund, and my brother here is Trusty, and we are the sons of Thorgrim the Proud."

Then Gunnlaug was silent, but spake at last: "What do we, brother Sigurd?" said he; "for now have we a hard matter to get out of, seeing that I wot well that Ketil our father will let slay them as soon as they come to Norway."

Said Sigurd: "Thou didst not ask me this when thou tookest them in; but I knew Viglund when I saw him, by Helga his sister. But meseems thou hast might to bring it

about that our father Ketil have no more power over them than thou wilt; and a most meet reward will that be for that wherein Thorgrim has done well to us.”

Thor-
grim's
sons fare
out from
Iceland

“It is well spoken,” said Gunnlaug: “let us do so.”

Now they had a fair wind and made Norway, and fared home to Raumsdale, and Ketil was from home; and when he came home, there were his sons in the hall, with Thorgrim's sons sitting in their midst; and they were a company of four-and-twenty.

Now they greeted not their father when he set him down in the high seat; but he knew his sons, but not the sons of Thorgrim: so he asked why they greeted him not, or who the stranger men were.

And Sigurd said, “One is called Viglund, and the other Trusty, the sons of Thorgrim the Proud.”

Said Ketil: “Stand up, all ye my men, and take them! And I would that Thorgrim the Proud also were come hither; and then should they all fare by one road.”

Sigurd the Sage answered and said: “Great is the difference between us here and Thorgrim the Proud; for he took us brethren from shipwreck, and did to us ever better and better, when he had us utterly at his will: but thou wilt slay his sons sackless: and belike, good fellows, we may do you a mischief before Thorgrim's sons be slain: and one fate shall be over us all.”

Then Ketil says that it is unmeet for him to fight against his own sons, and the wrath runs off him.

Then spake Sigurd: “This is my counsel, that my brother Gunnlaug take the whole matter in hand, for he is well proven in rightfulness.”

“Well, it must be so,” said Ketil, “rather than that we, father and sons, begin an ill strife together.”

So this was settled to be; and Gunnlaug spake: “This is my doom: Thorgrim shall keep the woman himself; but withal she shall forego the heritage of Earl Thorir her father, and my father shall duly take the said heritage; and my father shall give his daughter Ingibjorg to Trusty,

Viglund
the Fair

Thorgrim's son; and Sigurd the Sage shall wed Helga, Thorgrim's daughter. And this my doom I hold to firmly."

All thought it done well and wisely, and Ketil was well pleased with matters having come hereto.

So there they abode in good entertainment, the winter through, and Trusty wedded Ingibiorg: but in the summer they went a-warring, all the foster-brethren together, and became the most renowned of men, but Viglund bare away the prize from them all: and they were close upon three winters in this warfare.

But Viglund was never in more joyous mood than at the first; for Ketilrid was never out of his mind.

CHAPTER XIX. THE WEDDING OF KETILRID.

NOW must the story be taken up, whereas goodman Holmkel sat at home at Foss. And on a day he rode to Ingialdsknoll, and no man knew what he spake to Thorgrim: and thereafter he went home. Still Thorleif Steinolfson was importunate in the wooing of Ketilrid; but she was slow enough over it.

A little after Thorgrim sent three of his men from home, and they were away three weeks, and when they came home none knew what their errand had been.

Now this befell one day at Foss, that thither came thirty men. Holmkel asked their leader to name himself; and he said he was called Thord, and had his abode in the Eastfirths, and that his errand thither was the wooing of Ketilrid. The goodman put the matter before his daughter, and she was asked thereof, and she said it was as far as might be from her mind, for she deemed the man old, and she said she had no heart to be wedded at all.

Thorbior was exceeding eager that the bargain should be struck, and the end of it was, that Holmkel betrothed her to Thord, whether she were lieve or loth; and she went away with Thord at once, and the wedding was to be in the Eastfirths. So they made no stay till they got home, and

Ketilrid took the rule of all things there; yet men never saw her glad. TheWedding of Ketilrid

But Thord wedded her not; they both lay in one bed, but Ketilrid in such wise that there was a curtain between them.

So wore away a long space.

Thorleif was ill content that Ketilrid was wedded; but thought it not easy to do aught, whereas she was a long way off.

Thord did well to Ketilrid in all wise, but no gain that seemed to Ketilrid, because of the love she had for Viglund: for ever she bare about the flame of desire in her breast for his sake.

CHAPTER XX. VIGLUND COMES OUT TO ICELAND AGAIN.

VIGLUND and all the foster-brethren came home that summer from warfare, and Ketil gave them good welcome.

On a day were folk called to head-washing, but Viglund answered thereto: "Nay, I will have nought of this head-washing, nor have I since we parted, Ketilrid and I." Then he sang a stave:

"The linen-oak bath-lovely
Laid last on me the lather:
So nought have I to hurry
Unto another head-bath.
And me no more shall any
Gold-glittering of the maidens
Henceforth, in all my life-days,
In ashen bath bewash me."

Nor would Viglund let himself be bathed.

So there they abode in peace that winter; but in summer they made ready for Iceland, each company in their own ship; so they sailed into the sea, and parted company at sea; and Ketil's sons made White-water, and went to quarters at

Viglund
the Fair

goodman exceeding blithe, who served them with all kindness.

But it is told that Ketilrid had a veil ever before her face, for she would not that Viglund should know her, and that Viglund also for his part was not all so sure that it was she.

CHAPTER XXI. GUESTING AT GAUTWICK.

ON a day Ketilrid was standing without, and she was exceeding warm, and had rent the veil from her face: and in that nick of time Viglund came out and saw her visage clearly; and thereat was he much astonished, and flushed red as blood. He went into the hall, wherein was Trusty sitting, who asked him what was toward and what he had seen that he was so changed. Then Viglund sang a stave:

“Nought shall I say thee lie now:
Ne’er saw I eyen sweeter
Since when we twain were sundered,
O sweet one of the worm-lair.
This craven carle her clippeth;
Shall I not carve from off him
His head? all grief go with him!—
Grief from the gold one gat I.”

Now Ketilrid never had a veil before her face from that time forward that she wotted that Viglund knew her.

So Trusty said, “The last thing to be done I deem is to do the goodman any harm, as well as he has done to us; a luckless deed it will be to slay her husband sackless: let it be far from thee!” And he sang:

“Never, burnt-rings’ breaker,
Shall ye be brought together,
If felon’s deed thou doest
On Fafnir’s-land’s good dealer.
Not ever, nor in all things,
Availeth shielded onset;
Aright must we arede us,
O brother wise in trials.”

So the day wears away to evening, and folk go to rest. But Guesting in the night Viglund arose and went to the bed wherein slept at Gaut-Ketilrid and the goodman; the light was drawn up into the wick hall roof, so that aloft it was light, but all below was dim. So he lifted up the curtains and saw Ketilrid lying turned towards the wall, and the goodman turned away thence towards the bedstock, with his head laid thereon, handy to be smitten off.

Then was Viglund at the point to draw his sword, but therewith came Trusty to him, and said, "Nay, beware of thyself, and do no such fearful and shameful deed as to slay a sleeping man. Let none see in thee that thy heart is in this woman! bear thyself like a man!" And he sang:

"My friend, mind here the maiden
Who murdereth all thy gladness;
See there thy fair fame's furtherer,
Who seemeth fain of saying:
Though one, the lovely woman,
Hath wasted all thy life-joy,
Yet keep it close within thee,
Nor cry aloud thereover."

Therewith was Viglund appeased, and he wondered withal that there was so wide a space in the bed betwixt them.

So the brethren went to their beds; but Viglund slept but little that night, and the next morning was he exceeding downcast; but the goodman was very joyous, and he asked Viglund what made him so sorrowful.

Then Viglund, whom all deemed was called Erne, sang a stave:

"The white hands' ice-hill's wearer
Hath wasted all my joyance:
O strong against me straineth
The stream of heaped-up waters!
This sapling oak thy wife here
From out my heart ne'er goeth;
Well of tormenting wotteth
The woman mid her playing."

Viglund
the Fair

“Like enough it is so,” said the master; “but come, it were good that we disported us and played at the chess.”

And they did so; but little heed had Erne of the board because of the thought he had of the goodwife, so that he was like to be mated: but therewith came the mistress thither, and looked on the board, and sang this half-stave:

“O battles’ thunder-bearer
Be glad and shift thy board-piece
On to this square thou seest;
So saith the staff of hangings.”

Then the master looked on her and sang:

“Again to-day gold-goddess
Against her husband turneth,
Though I the wealth-god owe thee
For nought but eld meseemeth.”

So Erne played as he was bidden, and the game was a drawn game.

The goodwife talked little with Erne; but on a day when they met without alone, they two, Viglund and Ketilrid, they did talk together somewhat; yet not for long; and when they had made an end of talking, Viglund sang:

“O slender sweet, O fair-browed,
Meseemeth this thy husband
As ferry-boat all foredone
Amid the Skerries floating.
But thee, when I behold thee
Go forth so mighty waxen,
’Tis as a ship all stately
O’er sea-mews’ pasture sweeping.”

Then they left off talking, and Ketilrid went in; but Erne fell to talk with the goodman, who was joyous with the ship-master; but Erne sang:

“Friend, watch and ward now hold thou
Of this thy wife, the fair one;
And heed lest that spear-Goddess
Should go about to waste me.
If oft we meet without doors,
I and the twined-thread’s Goddess,
Who knows whose most she should be,
Or mine or thine, that gold-wife?”

Guesting
at Gaut-
wick

And another stave he sang:

“Fight-grove full fain would not
Be found amidst of man-folk,
So tame to maids’ enticing
To take a man’s wife wedded.
But if amid the mirk-tide
She came here made as woman,
I cannot soothly swear it
But soft I should enfold her.”

Said the master: “O, all will go well enough if she sees to it herself.” And so they left this talk.

Ever did the goodman do better and better to the ship-master, but it availed him nought; a sorrowful man he was ever, and never spake one joyous word. But Trusty, his brother, thought such harm of this, that he talked to him full oft, bidding him put it from his mind and take another woman. But Erne said, “It may not be; I should not love her; yea, moreover, I could not set the thing afoot.” And he sang:

“Another man’s wife love I,
Unmanly am I holden,
Though old, and on her beam-ends,
Fallen is the fallow oak-keel.
I wot not if another,
At any time hereafter,
Shall be as sweet unto me—
The ship drave out of peril.”

Viglund
the Fair

"It may be so," said Raven. So they went together into the hall: and there sat the master with the goodwife on his knees, and he with his arms about her middle: but Erne saw that she was not right glad thereat.

Now she slipped from his knees, and went and sat down on the bench, and wept. Erne went thither, and sat down by her, and they talked together softly. And he sang:

"Sweet linen-bride, full seldom
In such wise would I find thee,
An hoary dotard's hand-claws
Hanging about thee, bright one.
Rather, O wristfires' lady,
Would I around thy midmost
Cast as my longing led me,
These lands of gold light-shining."

"Mayhappen," said the goodwife, "it will never be." Therewith she arose and went away: but the master was exceeding joyous and said: "Now, Erne, I will that thou have care of my household, and all else that concerns me, whiles I am away, because I am going from home and shall be away for a month at the least; and thee I trust best of all in all matters that concern me."

Erne said little to this.

CHAPTER XXII. A WEDDING AT GAUTWICK.

THEN the master went from home with fourteen men; and when he was gone Erne spake to his brother and said: "Methinks it were well if we went from home, and abode not here whiles the master is away; for otherwise folk will deem that I am about beguiling his wife; and then would a mighty difference be seen betwixt me and the master."

So they rode from home, and abode by their shipmates till the goodman came home on the day named.

And now were there many more with him than before: for in his company were Thorgrim the Proud, and Olof his wife,

and Helga his daughter, and Sigurd the Sage, and Gunnlaug his brother, and Holmkel the master of Foss: and they were fifty all told. Therewith also came home the two mariners.

A Wed-
ding at
Gautwick

And now Ketilrid had arrayed all things as the goodman had commanded her, with the intent to hold his wedding.

But when they were all set down in the hall the master stood up and said: "So stands the case, Shipmaster Erne, that thou hast abided here through the winter, and thy brother with thee, and I know that thou art called Viglund and thy brother Trusty, and that ye are the sons of Thorgrim the Proud: no less I know all thy mind toward Ketilrid; and with many trials and troubles have I tried thee, and all hast thou borne well: nevertheless thy brother hath holpen thee that thou hast not fallen into any dreadful case or done any dreadful thing: and I myself indeed had ever something else to fall back upon. For now will I no longer hide from thee that I am called Helgi, and am the son of Earl Eric, and thine own father's brother: therefore wooed I Ketilrid, that I might keep her safe for thee, and she is a clean maiden as for me. Ketilrid hath borne all well and womanly: for I and the others hid these things from her: forsooth we have lain never under one sheet, for the bedstock cometh up between the berths we lay in, though we had one coverlit over all: and I deem indeed that it would be no trial nor penance to her though she knew no man whiles thou wert alive. But all these things were done by the rede of Master Holmkel, and methinks it were well that thou pray him for peace, and crave his daughter of him thereafter: and surely he will give thee peace, for things better and nobler than this he hath done to thee in your dealings together."

Then went Viglund to Master Holmkel, and laid his head on his knee, and bade him do therewith whatso he would; and he answered in this wise:

"That shall be done with thine head which shall please my daughter Ketilrid best, and assuredly we will be at peace together."

So Holmkel gave his daughter Ketilrid to Viglund, and

Viglund
the Fair

Thorgrim gave Helga his daughter to Sigurd the Sage, and Helgi gave Ragnhild his daughter to Gunnlaug the Masterful; and folk sat down to all these weddings at one and the same time.

Then each went to his own house: Viglund and Ketilrid loved their life exceeding well now, and dwelt at Foss after Holmkel, Ketilrid's father: but Gunnlaug the Masterful and Sigurd his brother fared abroad and set up house in Norway: but Trusty abode at Ingialdsknoll after Thorgrim his father.

SO HERE ENDETH THE TALE.

Whoso thinketh this good game,
God keep us all from hurt and grame;
And may all things have such an end
That all we unto God may wend.
He who to tell this tale hath will,
He needeth no long time be still;
For here we cast off pain and woe,
Here noble deeds may Champions know,
Manners and tales and glorious lore,
And truth withal that shall endure,
Thanks to him who hearkened it,
Yea and unto him who writ,
And Thorgeir that engrossed it fair.
God's and Mary's grace be here!

TWO SONS & A FATHER DID WRITE THIS BOOK:
PRAY YE TO GOD FOR THEM ALL. AMEN.

THE TALE OF HOGNI AND HEDINN

CHAPTER I. OF FREYIA AND THE DWARFS.

EAST of Vanaquisl in Asia was the land called Asialand or Asiahome, but the folk that dwelt there was called Æsir, and their chief town was Asgard. Odin was the name of the king thereof, and therein was a right holy place of sacrifice. Niord and Frey Odin made Temple-priests thereover; but the daughter of Niord was Freyia, and she was fellow to Odin and his concubine.

Now there were certain men in Asia, whereof one was called Alfrigg, the second Dwalin, the third Berling, the fourth Gerrer: these had their abode but a little space from the King's hall, and were men so wise in craftsmanship, that they laid skilful hand on all matters; and such-like men as they were did men call dwarfs. In a rock was their dwelling, and in that day they mingled more with menfolk than as now they do.

Odin loved Freyia full sore, and withal she was the fairest woman of that day: she had a bower that was both fair and strong; insomuch, say men, that if the door were shut to, none might come into the bower aforesaid without the will of Freyia.

Now on a day went Freyia afoot by that rock of the dwarfs, and it lay open: therein were the dwarfs a-smithying a golden collar, and the work was at point to be done: fair seemed that collar to Freyia, and fair seemed Freyia to the dwarfs.

Now would Freyia buy the collar of them, and bade them in return for it silver and gold, and other good things. They said they lacked not money, yet that each of them would sell his share of the collar for this thing, and for nought else—that she should lie a night by each of them: wherefore, whether she liked it better or worse, on such wise did she strike the bargain with them; and so the four nights being outworn, and all conditions fulfilled, they delivered the collar to Freyia; and she went home to her bower, and held her peace hereof, as if nought had befallen.

Hogni &
Hedinn

CHAPTER II. OF THE STEALING OF FREYIA'S COLLAR, AND HOW SHE MAY HAVE IT AGAIN.

THERE was a man called Farbauti, which carl had to wife a carline called Laufey; she was both slim and slender, therefore was she called Needle. One child had these, a son called Loki; nought great of growth was he, but betimes shameless of tongue and nimble in gait; over all men had he that craft which is called cunning; guileful was he from his youth up, therefore was he called Loki the Sly.

He betook himself to Odin at Asgard and became his man. Ever had Odin a good word for him, whatsoever he turned to; yet withal he oft laid heavy labours upon him, which forsooth he turned out of hand better than any man looked for: moreover, he knew wellnigh all things that befell, and told all he knew to Odin.

So tells the tale that Loki knew how that Freyia had gotten the collar, yea and what she had given for it; so he told Odin thereof, and when Odin heard of it he bade Loki get the collar and bring it to him. Loki said it was not a likely business, because no man might come into Freyia's bower without the will of her; but Odin bade him go his ways and not come back before he had gotten the collar. Then Loki turned away howling, and most of men were glad thereof whenas Loki throve nought.

But Loki went to Freyia's bower, and it was locked; he strove to come in, and might not; and cold it was without, so that he fast began to grow a-cold.

So he turned himself into a fly, and fluttered about all the locks and the joints, and found no hole therein whereby he might come in, till up by the gable-top he found a hole, yet no bigger than one might thrust a needle through; none the less he wriggled in thereby. So when he was come in he peered all about to see if any waked, but soon he got to see that all were asleep in the bower. Then in he goeth unto Freyia's bed, and sees that she hath the collar on her with the clasp turned downward. Thereon Loki changed himself into a flea, and sat on Freyia's cheek, and stung her so that she

woke and turned about, and then fell asleep again. Then Loki drew from off him his flea's shape, and undid the collar, and opened the bower, and gat him gone to Odin therewith.

The stealing of Freyia's Collar

Next morn awoke Freyia and saw that the doors were open, yet unbroken, and that the goodly collar was gone. She deemed she knew what guile had wrought it, so she goeth into the hall when she is clad, and cometh before Odin the king, and speaketh to him of the evil he has let be wrought against her in the stealing of that dear thing, and biddeth him give her back her jewel.

Odin says that in such wise hath she gotten it, that never again shall she have it. "Unless forsooth thou bring to pass, that two kings, each served of twenty kings, fall to strife, and fight under such weird and spell, that they no sooner fall adown than they stand up again and fight on: always unless some christened man be so bold of heart, and the fate and fortune of his lord be so great, that he shall dare go into that battle, and smite with weapons these men: and so first shall their toil come to an end, to whatsoever lord it shall befall to loose them from the pine and trouble of their fell deeds."

Hereto said Freyia yea, and gat her collar again.

CHAPTER III. OF KING ERLING, & SORLI HIS SON.

IN those days, when four-and-twenty winters were worn away from the death of Peace-Frodi, a king ruled over the Uplands in Norway called Erling. He had a queen and two sons; Sorli the Strong the elder, and Erlend the younger: hopeful were they both, but Sorli was the stronger. They fell to warfare so soon as they were of age thereto; they fought with the viking Sindri, son of Sveigr, the son of Haki, the sea-king, at the Elfskerries; and there fell the viking Sindri and all his folk; there also fell Erlend Erlingson. Thereafter Sorli sailed into the East-salt-sea, and harried there, and did so many doughty deeds that late it were ere all were written down.

Hogni &
Hedinn

CHAP. IV. SORLI SLAYETH KING HALFDAN.

THERE was a king hight Halfdan, who ruled over Denmark, and abode in a stead called Roi's-well; he had to wife Hvedna the Old, and their sons were Hogni and Hakon, men peerless of growth and might, and all prowess: they betook them to warfare so soon as they were come to man's estate.

Now cometh the tale on Sorli again, for on an autumn-tide he sailed to Denmark. King Halfdan was minded as at this time to go to an assembly of the kings; he was well stricken in years when these things betid. He had a dragon so good that never was such another ship in all Norway for strength's sake, and all craftsmanship. Now was this ship lying moored in the haven, but King Halfdan was a-land and had let brew his farewell drink. But when Sorli saw the dragon, so great covetise ran into his heart that he must needs have her: and forsooth, as most men say, no ship so goodly hath ever been in the Northlands, but it were the dragon Ellida, or Gnod, or the Long Worm.

So Sorli spake to his men, bidding them array them for battle; "for we will slay King Halfdan and have away his dragon."

Then answered his word a man called Sævar, his Fore-castle-man and Marshal: "Ill rede, lord," saith he; "for King Halfdan is a mighty lord of great renown, and hath two sons to avenge him, who are either of them full famous men."

"Let them be mightier than the very Gods," said Sorli, "yet shall I none the less join battle."

So they arrayed them for the fight.

Now came tidings hereof to King Halfdan, and he started up and fared down to the ships with all his men, and they got them ready for battle.

Some men set before King Halfdan that it was ill rede to fight, and it were best to flee away because of the odds; but the king said that they should fall every one across the other's feet or ever he should flee. So either side arrayed them, and joined battle of the fiercest; the end whereof was such that

King Halfdan fell and all his folk, and Sorli took his dragon and all that was of worth.

Sorli
slayeth
King
Halfdan

Thereafter heard Sorli, that Hogni was come from warfare, and lay by Odins-isle; so thitherward straight stood Sorli, and when they met he told him of the fall of Halfdan his father, and offered him atonement and self-doom, and they to become foster-brethren. But Hogni gainsayed him utterly: so they fought as it sayeth in Sorli's Song. Hakon went forth full fairly, and slew Sævar, Sorli's Banner-bearer and Forecastle-man, and therewith Sorli slew Hakon, and Hogni slew Erling the king, Sorli's father.

Then they fought together, Hogni and Sorli, and Sorli fell before Hogni for wounds and weariness' sake: but Hogni let heal him, and they swore the oath of brotherhood thereafter, and held it well whiles they both lived. Sorli was the shortest-lived of them; he fell in the East-sea before the vikings, as it saith in the Sorli-Song, and here saith:

“Fell there the fight-greedy,
Foremost of war-host,
Eager in East-seas,
All on Hells' hall-floor;
Died there the doughty
In dale-fishes joy-tide,
With byrny-rod biting
The vikings in brand-thing.”

But when Hogni heard of the fall of Sorli, he went a-warring in the Eastlands that same summer, and had the victory in every place, and became king thereover; and so say men that twenty kings paid tribute to King Hogni, and held their realms of him.

Hogni won so great fame from his doughty deeds and his warfare that he was as well known by name north in the Finn-steads, as right away in Paris-town; yea, and all betwixt and between.

CHAPTER V. HEDINN HEARETH TELL OF
KING HOGNI, AND COMETH TO THE NORTH-
LANDS.

HIARANDI was the name of a king who ruled over Serkland; a queen he had, and one son named Hedinn, who from his youth up was peerless of growth, and strength, and prowess: from his early days he betook him to warfare, and became a Sea-king, and harried wide about Spain and the land of the Greeks, and all realms thereabout, till twenty kings paid tribute to him, and held of him land and fief.

On a winter abode Hedinn at home in Serkland, and it is said that on a time he went into the wood with his household; and so it befell him to be alone of his men in a certain wood-lawn, and there in the wood-lawn he saw a woman sitting on a chair, great of growth and goodly of aspect: he asked her of her name, and she named herself Gondul.

Then fell they a-talking, and she asked him of his doughty deeds, and lightly he told her all, and asked her if she wotted of any king who was his peer in daring and hardihood, in fame and furtherance; and she said she wotted of one who fell nowise short of him, and who was served of twenty kings no less than he, and that his name was Hogni, and his dwelling north in Denmark.

"Then wot I," said Hedinn, "that we shall try it which of us twain is foremost."

"Now will it be time for thee to go to thy men," said Gondul; "they will be seeking thee."

So they departed and he fared to his men, but she was left sitting there.

But so soon as spring was come Hedinn arrayed his departure, and had a dragon and three hundred men thereon: he made for the Northlands, and sailed all that summer and winter, and came to Denmark in the Springtide.

CHAPTER VI. HOGNI & HEDINN MEET, AND
SWEAR BROTHERHOOD TO EACH OTHER.

Hogni &
Hedinn
meet

KING Hogni sat at home this while, and when he heard tell how a noble king is come to his land he bade him home to a glorious feast, and that Hedinn took. And as they sat at the drink, Hogni asked what errand Hedinn had thither, that had driven him so far north in the world. Hedinn said that this was his errand, that they twain should try their hardihood and daring, their prowess and all their craftsmanship; and Hogni said he was all ready thereto.

So betimes on the morrow fared they to swimming and shooting at marks, and strove in tilting and fencing and all prowess; and in all skill were they so alike that none thought he could see betwixt them which was the foremost. Thereafter they swore themselves foster-brethren, and should halve all things between them.

Hedinn was young and unwedded, but Hogni was somewhat older, and he had to wife Hervor, daughter of Hiorvard, who was the son of Heidrek, who was the son of Wolfskin.

Hogni had a daughter, Hild by name, the fairest and wisest of all women, and he loved his daughter much. No other child had he.

CHAPTER VII. THE BEGUILING OF HEDINN,
AND OF HIS EVIL DEED.

THE tale telleth that Hogni went a-warring a little hereafter, and left Hedinn behind to ward the realm. So on a day went Hedinn into the wood for his disport, and blithe was the weather. And yet again he turned away from his men and came into a certain wood-lawn, and there in the lawn beheld the same woman sitting in a chair, whom he had seen aforetime in Serkland, and him seemed that she was now gotten fairer than aforetime.

Yet again she first cast a word at him, and became kind in speech to him; she held a horn in her hand shut in with a lid, and the king's heart yearned toward her.

She bade the king drink, and he was thirsty, for he was

Hogni & Hedinn gotten warm; so he took the horn and drank, and when he had drunk, lo a marvellous change came over him, for he remembered nought of all that was betid to him aforetime, and he sat him down and talked with her. She asked whether he had tried, as she had bidden him, the prowess of Hogni and his hardihood.

Hedinn said that sooth it was: "For he fell short of me in nought in any mastery we tried: so now are we called equal."

"Yet are ye nought equal," said she.

"Whereby makest thou that?" said he.

"In this wise," said she; "that Hogni hath a queen of high kindred, but thou hast no wife."

He answers: "Hogni will give me Hild, his daughter, so soon as I ask her; and then am I no worse wedded than he."

"Minished were thy glory then," she said, "wert thou to crave Hogni of alliance. Better were it, if forsooth thou lack neither hardihood nor daring according to thy boast, that thou have away Hild, and slay the queen in this wise: to wit, to lay her down before the beak of that dragon-ship, and let smite her asunder therewith in the launching of it."

Now so was Hedinn ensnared by evil heart and forgetfulness, because of the drink he had drunken, that nought seemed good to him save this; and he clean forgot that he and Hogni were foster-brethren.

So they departed, and Hedinn fared to his men; and this befell when summer was far spent.

Now Hedinn ordained his men for the arraying of the dragon, saying that he would away for Serkland. Then went he to the bower, and took Hild and the queen, one by either hand, and went forth with them; and his men took Hild's raiment and fair things. Those men only were in the realm, who durst do nought for Hedinn and his men; for full fearful of countenance was he.

But Hild asked Hedinn what he would, and he told her; and she bade him do it not: "For," quoth she, "my father will give me to thee if thou woo me of him."

"I will not do so much as to woo thee," said Hedinn.

"And though," said she, "thou wilt do no otherwise than The be-
bear me away, yet may my father be appeased thereof: but if guiling of
thou do this evil deed and unmanly, doing my mother to Hedinn
death, then never may my father be appeased: and this wise
have my dreams pointed, that ye shall fight and lay each
other a-low; and then shall yet heavier things fall upon you:
and great sorrow shall it be to me, if such a fate must fall
upon my father that he must bear a dreadful weird and heavy
spells: nor have I any joy to see thee sorehearted under bitter
toil."

Hedinn said he heeded nought what should come after,
and that he would do his deed none the less.

"Yea, thou mayest none other do," said Hild, "for not
of thyself dost thou it."

Then went Hedinn down to the strand, and the dragon
was thrust forth, and the queen laid down before the beak
thereof; and there she lost her life.

So went Hedinn aboard the dragon: but when all was
dight he would fain go a-land alone of his men, and into the
self-same wood wherein he had gone aforetime: and so, when
he was come into the wood-lawn, there saw he Gondul sitting
in a chair: they greeted each the other friendly, and then
Hedinn told her of his deeds, and thereof was she well con-
tent. She had with her the horn whereof he had drunk afore,
and again she bade him drink thereof; so he took it and
drank, and when he had drunk sleep came upon him, and he
fell tottering into her lap: but when he slept she drew away
from his head and spake: "Now hallow I thee, and give thee
to lie under all those spells and the weird that Odin com-
manded, thee and Hogni, and all the hosts of you."

Then awoke Hedinn, and saw the ghostly shadow of Gon-
dul, and him-seemed she was waxen black and over big; and
all things came to his mind again, and mighty woe he deem-
ed it. And now was he minded to get him far away some-
whither, lest he hear daily the blame & shame of his evil deed.

So he went to the ship and they unmoored speedily: the
wind blew off shore, and so he sailed away with Hild.

CHAPTER VIII. THE WEIRD FALLETH ON
THESE TWAIN, HOGNI AND HEDINN.

NOW cometh Hogni home, and comes to wot the sooth, that Hedinn hath sailed away with Hild and the dragon Halfdans-loom, and his queen is left dead there. Full wroth was Hogni thereat, and bade men turn about straightway and sail after Hedinn. Even so did they speedily, and they had a wind of the best, and ever came at eve to the haven whence Hedinn had sailed the morning afore.

But on a day whenas Hogni made the haven, lo the sails of Hedinn in sight on the main; so Hogni, he and his, stood after them; and most sooth is it told that a head-wind fell on Hedinn, whiles the same fair wind went with Hogni.

So Hedinn brought-to at an isle called Ha, and lay in the roadstead there, and speedily came Hogni up with him; and when they met Hedinn greeted him softly: "Needs must I say, foster-brother," saith he, "how evil hath befallen me, that none may amend save thou: for I have taken from thee thy daughter and thy dragon; and thy queen I have done to death. And yet is this deed done not from my evil heart alone, but rather from wicked witchcraft and evil spells; and now will I that thou alone shear and shape betwixt us. But I will offer thee to forego both Hild and the dragon, my men and all my wealth, and to fare so far out in the world that I may never come into the Northlands again, or thine eyesight, whiles I live."

Hogni answered: "I would have given thee Hild, hadst thou wooed her; yea, and though thou hadst borne away Hild from me, yet for all that might we have had peace: but whereas thou hast now wrought a dastard's deed in the laying down of my queen and slaying of her, there is no hope that I may ever take atonement from thee; but here, in this place, shall we try straightway which of us twain hath more skill in the smiting of strokes."

Hedinn answered: "Rede it were, since thou wilt nought else but battle, that we twain try it alone, for no man here is

guilty against thee saving I alone: and nowise meet it is that
guiltless men should pay for my folly and ill-doing.”

The weird
falleth on
Hogni &
Hedinn

But the followers of either of them answered as with one
mouth, that they would all fall one upon the other rather
than that they two should play alone.

So when Hedinn saw that Hogni would nought else but
battle, he bade his men go up a-land: “For I will fail Hogni
no longer, nor beg off the battle: so let each do according to
his manhood.”

So they go up a-land now and fight: full fierce is Hogni,
and Hedinn apt at arms and mighty of stroke.

Soothly is it said that such mighty and evil spells went
with the weird of these, that though they clave each other
down to the shoulders, yet still they stood upon their feet
and fought on: and ever sat Hild in a grove and looked on
the play.

So this travail and torment went on ever from the time
they first fell a-fighting till the time that Olaf Tryggvison
was king in Norway; and men say that it was an hundred
and forty and thrée years before the noble man, King Olaf,
brought it so about that his courtman loosed them from this
woeful labour and miserable grief of heart.

CHAPTER IX. HOGNI & HEDINN ARE LOOSED FROM THEIR WEIRD.

SO tells the tale, that in the first year of the reign of King
Olaf he came to the Isle of Ha, and lay in the haven
there on an eve. Now such was the way of things in that
isle, that every night whoso watched there vanished away,
so that none knew what was become of them.

On this night had Ivar Gleam-bright to hold ward: so
when all on ship-board were asleep Ivar took his sword, which
Iron-shield of Heathwood had owned erst, and Thorstein
his son had given to Ivar, and all his war-gear he took with-
al, and so went up on to the isle.

But when he was gotten up there, lo a man coming to meet
him, great of growth, and all bloody, and exceeding sorrow-

Hogni & Hedinn ful of countenance. Ivar asked that man of his name; and he said he was called Hedinn, the son of Hiarandi, of the blood of Serkland.

“Sooth have I to tell thee,” said he, “that whereas the watchmen have vanished away, ye must lay it to me and to Hogni, the son of Halfdan; for we and our men are fallen under such sore weird and labour, that we fight on both night and day; and so hath it been with us for many generations of men; and Hild, the daughter of Hogni, sitteth by and looketh on. Odin hath laid this weird upon us, nor shall aught loose us therefrom till a christened man fight with us; and then whoso he smiteth down shall rise up no more; and in such wise shall each one of us be loosed from his labour. Now will I crave of thee to go with me to the battle, for I wot that thou art well christened; and thy king also whom thou servest is of great goodhap, of whom my heart telleth me, that of him and his men shall we have somewhat good.”

Ivar said yea to going with him; and glad was Hedinn thereat, and said: “Be thou ware not to meet Hogni face to face, and again that thou slay not me before him; for no mortal man may look Hogni in the face, or slay him if I be dead first: for he hath the Ægis-helm in the eyes of him, nor may any shield him thence. So there is but one thing for it, that I face him and fight with him, whiles thou goest at his back and so givest him his death-blow; for it will be but easy work for thee to slay me, though I be left alive the longest of us all.”

Therewith went they to the battle, and Ivar seeth that all is sooth that Hedinn hath told him: so he goeth to the back of Hogni, and smiteth him into his head, and cleaveth him down to the shoulders: and Hogni fell dead, and never rose up again.

Then slew Ivar all those men who were at the battle, and Hedinn last of all, and that was no hard work for him. But when he came to the grove wherein Hild was wont to sit, lo she was vanished away.

Then went Ivar to the ship, when it was now daybreak,

and he came to the king and told him hereof: and the king Hogni &
made much of his deed, and said that it had gone luckily with Hedinn
him. loosed

But the next day they went a-land, and thither where the from their
battle had been, and saw nowhere any signs of what had be- weird
fallen there: but blood was seen on Ivar's sword as a token
thereof; and never after did the watchmen vanish away.

So after these things the king went back to his realm.

THE END OF THIS TALE.

THE TALE OF ROI THE FOOL

CHAPTER I. OF ROI.

THERE was a man called Roi who was born and bred in Denmark; he was the son of a good bonder, a man of prowess, and strong enow and of good wit. Roi was ever a-going chaffering, and got money together that wise; a good smith he was to wit, and that way also he got money full oft. In those days King Swein, the son of Harald, who was called Twibeard, ruled over Denmark, and was a king well loved of his folk.

Now on a summer Roi wrecked his ship on the south parts of Denmark, and lost goods and all, though the crew were barely saved. So they went up a-land, and Roi took to smithying, and gat goods thus; he was well loved of his fellows, nor had he long followed this craft before the money grew on his hands, for a full famous smith he was; yet was the story still the same, and he fared but ill with his goods; for as soon as he had gotten together what he would he went to sea and lost it all.

Roi had a mark in the face of him whereby he was lightly known from other men, for one of his eyes was blue and the other black : but a most manly man he was, and ruled his temper well, yea even were he ill dealt with ; ever he got wealth a-land, and lost it a-voyaging, and so when he had now thrice lost his ship in his chaffering voyages, he thought he could see, that he was not made for that craft, and yet going from land to land with his merchandise was the thing most to his mind: so he bethought him of going to King Swein, if perchance he might have any counsel of him, for he wotted that he was a man of good counsel, and that many had been the better thereof. Wherefore he went thither, and coming before the king greeted him.

And the king asked, "Who art thou?"

"Roi am I called," said he.

Quoth the king, "Art thou Roi the Come-to-nought?"

He answered, "I am wanting somewhat else from thee

than mocks such as these. I would rather of thee the help of Of Roi thy money and good-hap; maybe it shall avail me, for I would fain hope that thy health and hap may perchance prevail over my ill-luck."

King Swein said: "If thou be minded to seek luck of me it were well, so please you, that we were partners together."

Then said folk to the king, that it were ill-counselled to be partner of one so unlucky as Roi, and that he would lose his money at once: but the king answered:

"It shall be risked which may most prevail, a king's luck or his ill-luck."

Therewith he gave money to Roi that they should have together, and Roi went a chaffering on such covenant with the king, that he should pay nought if the goods were lost, and share what there was of gain, and that he should pay the king as much as he got from him to begin with. So Roi went his ways, and things went well with his voyages, and the money grew speedily, and he came back in autumn-tide to the king with much wealth; and no long time was passed before he became right wealthy, and was now called Roi the Wealthy, or the Stately, and every summer he went from land to land, chaffering, on the covenant aforesaid with the king.

CHAPTER II. OF ROI.

NOW on a time spake Roi with the king: "Now will I that thou take thy share, lord, lest things go ill and I lose thy goods."

Said the king: "Thou art minded then that it were better for our partnership to come to an end: but I was deeming it not ill-counselled for thee to abide in the land here under my good keeping, and that thou shouldst wed and dwell quietly here, with me to further thee. Nor do I deem it hopeful, this mind of thine for trading; a slippery matter it seems to me, even as thou hast proved aforetime." Nevertheless Roi would have the money shared, and so it was done, and the king said: "This is thy rede, Roi, and not mine; and

The tale
of Roi
the Fool

better meseems it had been since thou hast come to seek luck at my hands that it had abided by thee." Men took up the word therewith, and said how he himself had proven how the king's luck had come to him in time of need. But the king said that Roi had dealt well with him, and that it would be great scathe if he tumbled into any ill-luck; and therewithal they parted.

So Roi went on his voyage and had plenteous wealth. He sailed to Sweden this time, and made up the Low, and brought to off certain meads: and now had Roi all the ship's lading to himself. On a day he went a-land by himself alone, and when he had gone awhile he met a man with red hair and straight, and somewhat of a brisk lad to look on. Roi asked him of his name, and he said he was called Helgi, and was a court-man of King Eric; and he asked withal who the chapman was. Roi told his name, whereon Helgi said he knew him and had seen him before; and therewith he said he would deal with him. Roi asked how much he would deal for, and Helgi answered: "I wot that ye Danes are new come a-land, and I hear say that they are all thy servants, and that all the ship's lading is thine; and I will buy the whole lading of thee if thou wilt."

Roi said he was no whit of a peddler then; and Helgi said he could deal both in small and in great. Then asked Roi: "Where are the goods that I am to take of thee?" Helgi bade him go with him, and said that he would show him that there was no fooling in that his offer. So they went till they came to a storehouse all full of merchandise, and all that was therein Helgi offered Roi for his lading: Roi deemed it good chaffer, and thought that little would be his loss therein though they made a deal of it, and that the wares were good cheap. So it came to this that they struck the bargain, and a fitting-day was appointed between them; wherewith they parted, and Roi went back to his ship.

CHAPTER III. EARL THORGNYR'S TALK WITH HIS DAUGHTER. Thor-
gnyr's talk
with his
daughter

THE very next day came Helgi down with many men and beasts, and let flit away the lading, so that all was gone by nightfall; and soothly he had no lack either of men or of yoke-beasts hereto. A few days after Roi went up a-land alone, with the mind to settle matters for the flitting of his wares: and by this time was worn by one night over and above the time that he should have let fetch them. Roi deemed it mattered nought for a night, though he had come later than was appointed; for in sooth he was busied about many things. Roi was clad full goodly, for he was a very showy man, and he had a right noble knife and belt, on either whereof had many a penny been spent: good weapons he had, and a fair scarlet kirtle, with a broidered cloak over all.

The weather was fair, and he went till he came to the bower: it stood open, but his wares were not to be seen: this seemed marvellous to him, so he went all round about the bower till he came to the place whereas Helgi slept: so Roi asked him where was his goods? but Helgi said he knew nought of any goods he had. Roi asked how was that. Quoth Helgi, that he had borne out his goods at the time agreed on. "But I saw nought of thee to fetch them away: and it was not likely that I was going to let the things stand there for anyone to lay hands on; so I let flit all of it away, and I call it mine and not thine."

Roi said he dealt hastily and unjustly: "No marvel though thou get rich speedily if thou play such tricks as this often." Helgi said he had gone on in that wise for some while now, and found it availed him well enough. "But," says he, "the king hath a case against thee whereas thou heedest not thy goods: for it is the law of the land, that every man shall keep his own so that no thief may steal it, or else hath the king a case against him: now shall the king doom hereover." Roi said it looked little like making money if the king must needs charge him herewith. Therewith they parted.

Then went Roi to another court, and when he was gotten

The tale
of Roi
the Fool

well into the garth he saw two men coming hastily after him, and one was full like to his late customer to look on. Roi had cast his belt about his neck, and thereby hung that costly knife of his. Now this first of those twain was Thorgils, brother of Helgi: he made a snatch at the belt as soon as they met, and said withal: "Every man may take his own how he may: this belt and knifethou tookest from me in Normandy, but I let smithy the things for me in England."

Said Roi: "This looks little like making money," and smiled withal. Then he went his ways and they turned back.

But he had gone no long way ere he met a man, big and ill-looking, who had but one eye: so when they met Roi asked who he was; he answered: "I ought to know thee; for I have on me a token that we have met." Roi asked what the sign might be, and the man said: "No need for thee to feign that thou knowest not: thou wert born and bred in Denmark as thou wottest, and wert a one-eyed man; and on a time thou wentest a chaffering voyage, and layest by Samsey certain nights, whereat I chanced to be: thou hadst those men with thee, and bargained with them to bewitch me of my eye. Any man with his wits about him may see that both these eyes have been in one head: and now thou hast one, and I the other: but the king shall judge thereof to-morrow; yea, and of thy taking the knife and belt from Thorgils my brother."

"I wot not thereof," said Roi, "but belike heavy charges are flying about to-day;" and therewith he smiled somewhat. Therewith they parted, and Roi went to his ship: he told no man of all this, nor might any see of him but he was well content with all things.

The next morning went Roi to the town-gate, and was all alone: and when he came thereby there was hard by a certain house wherein he heard men talking: and one took up the word, and said: "Whether will Roi the Fool come to the Thing to-morrow I wonder." Another answered: "Well, things look ugly for him, for the king ever dooms according to the urging of those brethren, whether it be right or wrong."

Roi made as if he heard not, and went his ways till he came on a young maiden going to the water, and him-seemed he had never seen a fairer woman than her: and when he came up to her she looked on him and said, "Who art thou?"

Thor-
gnyr'stalk
with his
daughter

"I am called Roi," said he.

Quoth she, "Art thou Roi the Fool?"

He answered: "Well, belike it may now be a true name enough for me: yet have I borne, time was, a nobler name. What is thy name?" said he.

She said, "I am called Sigrbjorg, and I am the daughter of Thorgnyr the Lawman."

Said Roi: "Fain were I to be holpen somewhat of his wisdom: but wilt thou do anything for my helping?"

Said she: "My father hath ever little to say to men of Denmark: moreover, he is no friend to those brethren, and they have oftentimes had to bow before him."

Roi said: "But wilt thou give me some counsel herein?"

"No man hath asked my counsel heretofore," said she, "and it is not all so sure that I know aught that may avail thee, if I were to counsel thee aught: but thou art a man to be desired, so come with me, and take thy place under my loft-bower, and take good heed to what thou hearest spoken; and that may avail thee, if any give counsel in thy case."

He said that so it should be; and she went her ways, but Roi abode under her loft-bower.

Now Thorgnyr knew the voice of his daughter as she came into the chamber, and asked her: "What like weather is it abroad, daughter?"

"Good is the weather," said she.

Said Thorgnyr: "Will Roi the Fool come to the Thing to-day?"

She said she knew not.

"Why sighest thou so heavily, daughter?" said Thorgnyr. "Hast thou met Roi the Fool? didst thou think him a goodly man, and one to be desired? wouldst thou give him help and furtherance?"

She said: "Say thou now, if thou wert so grievously be-

The tale
of Roi
the Fool

stead as he is, whither thou wouldst turn to, whenas no man would take money to further thy case?"

Thorgnyr answered: "I see nought hard to deal with herein: I would lettrick meet trick: Roi will know well enow how to answer Helgi: every man may understand, that if one take another's goods by guile and treason, and do nought for him in return, the king hath a case against him, if the truth come uppermost: and he may make him a thief, and put him from all his wealth and honour; and well may Roi pay back lie for lie—forsooth he knoweth all about this already."

She answered: "He would not be Roi the Fool were he as wise as thou: but what wouldst thou do if a man claimed the eye from out thine head?" said she, "or how wouldst thou answer him?"

Thorgnyr answered: "Let marvel meet marvel," and therewith he told her what he would meet either case withal; but the tale showeth hereafter what he said.

CHAPTER IV. THE STRIFE OF ROI & HELGI.

AFTER these things Sigrbjorg went away and found Roi, and asked him whether he had laid to heart that which had been counselled him; and he said he deemed he would be able to call to mind much of it. Then she said:

"Join thyself to my father's company when he rideth to the Thing, and heed not his hard speech though he cast but cold words at thee: for he knoweth belike that I have met thee, and that my heart yearneth toward thee; wherefore I hope that he will help thee in thy need: all the more, as he wotteth that I deem the matter to touch me closely. But no counsel can I give thee if thou art not counselled herewith."

Therewithal they parted; and when Thorgnyr was ready he rides to the Thing, and Roi met him by the very town-gate, and greeted him well.

Thorgnyr said: "Who art thou?" and Roi told of himself.

Thorgnyr said: "What would Roi the Fool in my company? go thou another road, I will not have thee with us."

Roi answered: "Nay, thou wilt not spare a word to bid me

follow thee, and go by the road I will, whereas there nought The strife
is to hurt thee in me, and I am a stranger here, and would of Roi
fain get the good of thy company: and need enough withal and Helgi
driveth me on this journey, and biddeth me further my case
somewhat."

So men took up the word, and said that sooth it was. So
they go on till they came to the Thing, and Thorgnyr had a
great company, and thither were come withal many folk of
the land.

So Thorgnyr spake when men were come to the Thing:
"Are those brethren, Helgi and Thorgils, come hither?"

They said yea.

"Then is it due," said Thorgnyr, "to make known to the
king concerning your dealings with Roi the Fool."

Then said Helgi: "I say so much, that it was agreed be-
tween us that Roi should have all the wares that were in the
bower, but I should bear them out and empty the bower;
and a day was appointed for his coming back again: but I
was to take in return all the lading of his ship and flit it away.
And now, lord," says he, "I did according to covenant; but
when I had cleared the storehouse and borne out the wares
Roi was not come; so I let flit it all away, for I would not
that a thief should steal it: and now I claim the goods for
mine own. But I say that thou, king, hast a case against him,
because he took no heed of his goods, but would have other
men come to ill by his wealth: so give thou judgment, lord,
concerning these things."

Said the king: "A trick was this; yet it may be that thou
wilt come by the money, if things went that road. Was such
the covenant, Roi?"

He said that he might not gainsay it. "Yet is there a flaw
herein, lord: on such terms were Helgi and I agreed, when
we struck the bargain, that I was to own all that was in the
storehouse: and now a part of all call I creeping things,
cankerworm, and moth, and all hurtful things that were
therein. All these I say he should have cleared out of his
storehouse: and meseems he hath not done it: and there-

The tale
of Roi
the Fool

withal I claim Helgi as mine own; for he was in the storehouse with me when we struck the bargain: and though he be but a sorry man, yet may I keep him for my thrall, or perchance sell him at a thrall-cheaping: so give thou judgment, lord king, concerning these things."

The king said: "With a crafty one hast thou to do now, Helgi, and no witless man."

Then said Thorgnyr: "Thou hast spoken well, Roi, and may not lightly be gainsayed: but what is to be said about thy dealings, Thorgils?"

Thorgils answered: "I say that Roi hath taken from me knife and belt, either of them dear-bought things."

Thorgnyr said: "Then must Roi answer somewhat hereto, or else confess, if he knoweth it for true."

Roi said: "Well, I will answer somewhat. I was born and bred in Denmark, and had a brother called Sigurd, a likelier lad than I in all wise, but younger, as might well be seen: so on a time I fared with him chaffering in Normandy, and he was then twelve winters old. On a day the lad met a man in the wood, big and straight-haired, and they fell a-chaffering together; and a deal of money had got into the purse the lad bore, so that the other had nought to give in return: but this new-met man was keen-eyed at money, and would have the more part of what was there, wherefore he smote the lad to murder him, and when men were ware thereof they came and told me; but when I came there my brother lay dead, and the man was gone, and had left behind him this knife and belt, but all the money was gone. In such wise came I by these good things; and I say that Thorgils has stolen my money and slain my brother: doom thou, lord, concerning this."

Thorgnyr said: "Surely such men as these brethren are worthy of death."

CHAPTER V. WHAT ROI OFFERED UNTO THORIR.

What Roi
offered to
Thorir

NOW came forward Thorir, the brother of Helgi and Thorgils, and spake thus: "This that appertains unto me is a hard case;" and he told his tale, how he had lost his eye as is afore-written. "Lord," says he, "I look to thee to make my case good for me, for he may not gainsay it that even so it befell as I say: and it behoveth thee, lord, not to account outland men of more worth than we brethren, who this long while have been men useful to thee, and have not slept over any matters thou hast charged us with."

The king said: "This is a marvellous matter, and such as is seldom heard of: now, Roi, answer thou somewhat hereto."

Answereth Roi: "I know nought of it; and well might I show by ordeal that unsoothly it is said of me: yet shall there be somewhat bidden on my part for thine honour's sake, lord king."

"Let us hear it," said the king.

Said Roi: "I offer Thorir this; that the eye be pulled out of the head of each of us, and that the two of them be laid in the scales thereafter, and then if they be both come out of one head, they shall be heavy alike, and I shall atone to Thorir according to thy dooming: but if Thorir will not take this, then shall he be proven a liar in more matters than this one."

Thorir said that he would not take it.

Said Thorgnyr: "Then it comes to this, that thou liest, and ye brethren do as ever wickedly and unmanly: and belike overlong ye have woven a web of lies about you, and overlong and unmeetly have been trusted of the king, who hath deemed you better men than ye were. Now is there no need to hide the truth longer about these things: for it has now become as clear as day to all that no other doom is right, but that Roi shall do his will on the life and wealth of those brethren."

The tale
of Roi
the Fool

Said Roi: "Soon is my doom spoken, and I shall grow no wiser about it hereafter. The brethren Thorgils and Thorir do I doom to death, their lands to thee, king, and their chattels to me: but Helgi will I have put forth from the land so that he never show his face there again, and to be taken and slain if he ever set foot in Sweden; and all his wealth I adjudge to myself."

Then were the brethren Thorgils and Thorir taken, and a gallows was raised for them, and they were hanged thereon as thieves, according to the law of the land.

So was the Thing broken up, and each man fared thence to his own home: and now was Roi called Roi the Wise. Now he thanked Thorgnyr the Lawman for his aid, saying that he had scarce got off clear but for his counsel and wisdom. "And now," quoth he, "it may be thou wilt deem me importunate if I crave thy daughter of thee in wedlock."

Thorgnyr answered: "Well, I deem it wise to give thee a good answer herein; for betimes it was that my daughter showed me that she had set her heart upon thee to have thee."

So the wedding was done with great honour and glory, and the fairest of feasts was holden there.

Thereafter Roi arrayed him for departure, and fared to Denmark, and came to King Swein, and told him all about his voyage, and how it had gone with him: and said, that to no man was he bound to be so good as to King Swein; and therewith he gave him many good things from Sweden. King Swein said he had done well and happily, howbeit there had been close steering in the matter how it would turn out: wherewith he and the king departed, and were friends ever after while they lived. Then Roi went to Sweden, and found Thorgnyr the Lawman dead, but Thorgnyr, his son, was Lawman in his stead, and was the wisest of men: he and Roi shared the money according to the law of the land, and in all concord. Roi was accounted a right good man, and his wife had the gift of foreseeing: many noble folk in Sweden are come from them.

THE TALE OF THORSTEIN STAFF-SMITTEN

THERE was a man called Thorarin, who dwelt in Sunnudale, an old man and feeble of sight: he had been a red-hand viking in his younger days, nor was he a man good to deal with though he were old. One son he had, hight Thorstein, a big man, sturdy, but well ruled, who worked in such wise about his father's house that three men else would not have turned out more work. Thorstein was not a wealthy man, but good weapons he had: stud-horses also that father and son owned, that brought them in the most of their money, whereas they would sell away the horse-colts, who were such that they never failed either in bottom or courage.

There was one Thord, a house-carle of Biarni of Hof: he took heed of Biarni's riding-horses, for a horse-learned man he was accounted. Thord was a very unjust man, and would let many a man feel that he was house-carle of a mighty man: yet was he not of better worth therefor, nor better befriended.

Two others also abode with Biarni, one named Thorhall, the other Thorvald: great tale-bearers about all that they heard in the country-side.

Now Thorstein and Thord set afoot a horse-fight for the young horses, and when they drave them together Thord's horse was put to the worse: so Thord smote Thorstein's horse on the nose with a great stroke when he saw he was getting the worst of it; which thing Thorstein saw, and smote Thord's horse in return a stroke bigger yet, so that Thord's horse ran away, and men fell a-whooping hugely.

Then Thord smote Thorstein with his horse-staff, and the stroke came on the brow so that the skin fell over the eyes. So Thorstein tore a clout from his shirt and bound up his brow, and made as if nought had happened, and bade men hide this from his father; and so the matter dropped. But Thorhall and Thorvald made a mock of this, and called him Thorstein Staff-smitten.

Thorstein A little before Yule that winter the women rose up early
Staff- to their work at Sunnudale, and then stood up Thorstein and
smitten bare in hay, and afterward lay down on a bench. Now cometh
in old Thorarin, his father, and asked who lay there, and
Thorstein told of himself.

“Why art thou so early afoot, son?” said old Thorarin.

Thorstein answered: “There are few to mate with me in the work I win here.”

“Art thou not ailing in the head-bone, son?” said Thorarin.

“I know nought thereof,” said Thorstein.

“What canst thou tell me, son, of the Horse-meet last summer? Wert thou not beaten into swooning like a hound, kinsman?”

“I think it not worth while,” said Thorstein, “to account it a stroke; it was a chance hap rather.”

Thorarin said: “I should not have thought it, that I could have a faint-heart for a son.”

“Father,” said Thorstein, “speak thou nought but what thou wilt not think overmuch said in time to come.”

“I will not say so much as my heart would,” said Thorarin.

Now rose up Thorstein and taketh his weapons, and went his ways from home till he came to the horse-house where Thord was a-heeding the horses of Biarni, and there he found Thord.

So Thorstein came up to him and said to him: “I would wot, friend Thord, whether that was a chance blow that I gat from thee last summer at the Horse-meet, or if it were done wilfully of thee?”

Thord answereth: “If thou hast two mouths, thrust thou thy tongue now in one, now in the other and call the one a chance stroke and the other a wilful: lo, there all the boot thou gettest of me.”

“See to it,” said Thorstein, “that I most like shall not claim boot of thee again.” And he fell on him therewith and smote him his death-blow. Then he went to the house at Hof, and met a woman without and said to her: “Tell thou

to Biarni that a beast hath gored Thord, his horse-boy, and that he will abide him there by the horse-house till he cometh."

Thorstein
Staff-
smitten

"Go thy ways home, man," said she, "and I will tell it when it seemeth good to me."

So Thorstein went home and the woman went to her work.

Biarni rose up that morning, and when he was gotten to table he asked where Thord was, and men answered that he must have gone to the horses.

"I should have thought he would have been home by now if he were well," said Biarni.

Then the woman whom Thorstein had met took up the word: "True it is what is oft said of us womanfolk, that there is little of wits at work where we women are. Here came this morning Thorstein Staff-smitten, and said that a beast had gored Thord so that he might not help himself: but I was loth to wake thee, and so it slipped out of my head."

Then Biarni went from the table and out to the horse-house, and found Thord slain; and he was buried thereafter.

Biarni set a-foot a bloodsuit, and had Thorstein made guilty of the slaying: but Thorstein abode at home in Sunnudale and worked for his father, and Biarni let things be.

In the autumn sat men by the singeing-fires at Hof, but Biarni was lying outside the wall of the fire-hall, and hearkened thence the talk of men.

Now those brethren Thorhall and Thorvald take up the word: "We thought not when we first took up abode with Slaying Biarni that we should have been singeing lambs' heads here, while Thorstein, Biarni's outlaw, was singeing wethers' heads at Sunnudale: better had it been to have spared his kin something more in Bodvarsdale rather than to have let his outlaw hold his head so high in Sunnudale; but 'most men are foredone when wounds befall them:' nor wot we when he will wipe this stain from his honour."

Thorstein A certain man answered: "It is worse to say such words
Staff- than to hold peace over them: like it is that the trolls have
smitten set the tongues wagging in the heads of you. For we deem
that Biarni is loth to take the help and sustenance from the
sightless father and other helpless creatures at Sunnudale.
Marvellous I shall deem it if ye are oft a-singeing lambs'
heads here, or laughing over what betid in Bodvarsdale."

Now go men to table and so to sleep, and nought was it
seen of Biarni that he had taken to heart what had been
talked.

But the next morning Biarni waked Thorhall and Thor-
vald, and bade them ride to Sunnudale, and bring him at
breakfast-tide the head of Thorstein sheared from his body:
"For meseemeth ye are the most like to wipe the stain from
my honour if I have not heart to do it myself."

Now deem they that they have assuredly spoken over-
much, but they go their ways nevertheless till they come to
Sunnudale.

Thorstein stood in the door there whetting a sax, and
when they came thereto he asked them what they would,
and they said they must needs seek their horses: so Thor-
stein said they had but a little way to seek, "For here they
are by the garth."

"It is not sure," say they, "that we shall find the horses,
unless thou show us of them clearly."

So Thorstein went out; and when they were come down
into the garth Thorvald hove up his axe and ran at him:
Thorstein smote him with his hand so that he fell forward,
and then put the sax through him. Then would Thorhall be
on him, and fared in likewise with Thorvald. Then Thor-
stein bindeth them both a-horseback, and layeth the reins
on the horses' necks, and bringeth them all on to the road,
and home now go the horses to Hof.

The house-carles were without at Hof, and they go in and
tell Biarni that Thorvald and his fellow were come home, and
they said that they had not gone for nought. So Biarni goeth
out and seeth how their dealings have gone; and he made no

words about the matter, but had them laid in earth, and all Thorstein
is now quiet till Yule over. Staff-

Then Rannveig took up the word one night, when they smitten
came into bed together, Biarni and she:

“What thinkest thou is most talked of in the country-side?” saith she.

“I wot not,” saith Biarni: “many men are unnoteworthy of their words,” saith he.

“Well,” says she, “this is oftenest in men’s mouths, ‘What will Thorstein Staff-smitten do that thou wilt think thou must needs avenge?’ He hath now slain three of thy house-carles: and thy Thingmen think that there is no upholding in thee if this be unavenged; and the hands laid on knee are ill-laid for thee.”

Biarni answereth: “Now it comes to that which is said: ‘None will be warned by another’s woe;’ yet will I hearken to what thou sayest. Few men though hath Thorstein slain sackless.”

Therewith they drop this talk and sleep away the night.

On the morrow wakeneth Rannveig as Biarni took down his shield, and asked him what he would?

He answereth: “We shall shift and share honour between us in Sunnudale to-day, Thorstein and I.”

“How many in company?” saith she.

“I will not drag a host against Thorstein,” saith he. “I shall fare alone.”

“Do it not,” saith she, “to risk thyself alone under the weapons of that man of Hell!”

Said Biarni: “Yea, dost thou not after the fashion of women, bewailing now what ye egged on to then? A long while oft I bare the taunts both of thee and of others, but it will not avail to stay me when I will be afoot.”

So fareth now Biarni to Sunnudale, where stood Thorstein in the door, and certain words went between them. Said Biarni: “To-day shalt go with me, Thorstein, to the single-fight on yonder knoll amidst the home-mead.”

“All is lacking to me,” said Thorstein, “that I might fight

Thorstein with thee: but I will get me abroad so soon as a ship saileth;
Staff- for I know of thy manliness, that thou wilt get work done for
smitten my father if I fare from him."

"It availeth not to cry off," said Biarni.

"Give me leave then to see my father first," said Thorstein.

"Yea, sure," saith Biarni.

So Thorstein went in and told his father that Biarni was come thither, who bade him to single-fight. Old Thorarin answered:

"A man must look for it if he have to do with one mightier than he, and abide in the same country-side with him, and hath done him some dishonour, that he will not live to wear out many shirts. Nor may I mourn for thee, for meseemeth thou hast earned it: so take thy weapons and do thy manliest. Time has been when I would not have budged before such as Biarni: yet is he the greatest of champions. Now would I rather lose thee than have a coward son."

So Thorstein went out, and then they went to the Knoll, and fell a-fighting eagerly, smiting the armour sorely from each other. And when they had fought a long while, Biarni said to Thorstein: "I am athirst, for I am more unwont to the work than thou."

"Go thou to the brook and drink, then," said Thorstein.

That did Biarni, and laid his sword down beside him. Thorstein took up the sword and looked on it, and said: "This sword thou wilt not have had in Bodvarsdale."

Biarni answered not, and they went up again on to the Knoll, and fought for an hour's space; and Biarni deemed the man skilled of fight, and faster on foot than he had looked for.

"Many haps hinder me to-day," said Biarni: "now is my shoe-tie loose."

"Bind it up, then," said Thorstein.

So Biarni stoops down; but Thorstein went in and brought out two shields and a sword, and went to the Knoll to Biarni, and said to him:

"Here is a shield and a sword which my father sendeth thee, and the blade will not dull more in smiting than that

which thou hast had heretofore. And for me, I am loth to stand shieldless any longer before thy strokes; nay, I were fain to leave this play, for I fear me that thy luck will go further than my lucklessness: and every lad listeth to live if he may rule the rede.” Thorstein Staff-smitten

“It availeth not to beg off,” said Biarni; “we shall fight on yet.”

“I will not smite first,” said Thorstein.

Then Biarni smote away all the shield from Thorstein, and after Thorstein smote the shield from Biarni.

“A great stroke,” said Biarni.

Thorstein answered: “Thine was no less.”

Biarni said: “Better biteth now that same weapon of thine which thou hast borne all day afore.”

Thorstein said: “I would spare myself an illhap if I might; and with thee I fight afeard: I will let all the matter lie under thy dooming.”

And now it was Biarni’s turn to smite, and they were both shieldless. So Biarni said: “It will be an ill bargain to take a crime to one instead of a goodhap: I shall deem me well paid for my three house-carles by thee alone if thou wilt be true to me.”

Thorstein answereth: “Time and place served me to-day that I might have bewrayed thee, if so be my haplessness had been mightier than thy good hap: I will not bewray thee.”

“I see of thee,” said Biarni, “that thou art peerless among men. Give me leave to go in to thy father, and tell him such things as I will.”

“Go thou in as for me,” said Thorstein, “but fare thou warily.”

So Biarni went in, and to the shut-bed wherein lay the carle Thorarin. Thorarin asked who went there; and Biarni named himself.

“What tidings tellest thou me, my Biarni?” said Thorarin.

“The slaying of Thorstein thy son,” said Biarni.

“Made he any defence?” said Thorarin.

“I think no man hath been better man at arms than was Thorstein thy son.”

Thorstein "Nought wondrous," said the old man; "though thou
Staff- wert hard to deal with in Bodvarsdale if thou hast overcome
smitten my son."

Then said Biarni: "I bid thee to Hof, and thou shalt sit in the second high-seat whiles thou livest, and I will be to thee in a son's stead."

"So it fareth with me," said the old man, "as with them who have no might, that 'Oft is the fool fain of promise.' But such are the promises of you great men, when ye will appease a man after such haps as this, that it is a month's rest to us, and thereafter are we held even as worthy as other poor wretches, and no sooner for all that do our sorrows wear out. Nevertheless, he who taketh handsel of such a man as thee may be well content with his lot, when matters are to be doomed on; and this handsel will I take of thee. So come thou on to my shut-bed floor, and draw very nigh, for the old carle tottereth on his feet now with eld and feebleness; nor deem it so but my dead son yet runneth in my head."

So Biarni went up on to the shut-bed floor, and took old Thorarin by the hand, and found him fumbling with a sax which he had a mind to thrust into Biarni. So he drew aback his hand and said: "Wretchedest of old carles! now shall it go as meet is betwixt us! Thorstein thy son lives, and shall home with me to Hof: but I will get thee thralls to work for thee, nor shalt thou want for aught whiles thou livest."

So Thorstein fared home to Hof with Biarni, and served him till his death-day, and was deemed peerless of any man for manhood and courage.

Biarni kept his honour still, and waxed ever in friendship and good conditions the older he grew; and was the best proven of all men, and was a man of great faith in his latter days. He fared abroad and went south, and in that journey died, and resteth in the burg called Valeri, a little way hitherward from Rome-town. Biarni was a man happy of kin: his son was Skeggbroddi, much told of in tale, a man peerless in his days.

So here an end of telling of Thorstein Staff-smitten.

NOTES

THE TALE OF HOGNI & HEDINN (pp. 127-139)

From the *Skáldskaparmál*, Chap. 50.

BATTLE is called the Tempest or Storm of the Host of Hedinn, and weapons are called the Fires of the Host of Hedinn, or the Wands of the Host of Hedinn: but this is the story told thereof:

A king, who is named Hogni, had a daughter hight Hild, whom a king hight Hedinn, son of Hiarandi, took as a prey of war whenas King Hogni was gone to an assembly of the kings; who, when he heard that there was war in his realm, and that his daughter was borne away, fared with his host a-seeking Hedinn, and heard of him that he had sailed north along the land. But when King Hogni came to Norway, he heard that Hedinn had sailed West over the Sea; so Hogni sailed after him, right away to the Orkneys, and when he came to the island called Há, there was Hedinn before him with his company.

Then fared Hild to her father, and offered him a necklace as atonement on Hedinn's part; and said that on the other hand Hedinn was all ready to fight, and that Hogni need look for no sparing from him. Hogni answered his daughter roughly, and when she met Hedinn she told him that Hogni would have no peace, and bade him array him for battle. And so they did, either of them, and went up on to the island, and ordered their hosts. Then called Hedinn to Hogni his father-in-law, and bade him peace, and much gold in atonement.

Then answered Hogni: "Over-late hast thou bidden this, if thou wilt have peace; for now have I drawn Däinsloom whom the Dwarfs wrought, who shall be a man's bane every time he is bare, and never faltereth in his stroke, and no hurt that cometh of him healeth."

Then answereth Hedinn: "The sword thou art praising, and not the victory. A good sword I call it that clings to its master."

Then began they that battle which is called the Slaughter of the Host of Hedinn, and fought all that day, and at night-tide the Kings fared to their ships.

But in the night went Hild to the field of the slain, and woke up by witchcraft all them that were dead; and the next day went the Kings to the field of battle and fought, and all they withal who had fallen the day before.

So fared that battle day after day, that they that fell, and all weapons and armour of defence that lay on the field of battle, turned to stone; but when day dawned stood up all the dead men and fought, and all the weapons were of avail again. And so is it said in songs, that in this wise shall the Host of Hedinn abide the Doom of the Gods.

NOTE TO PAGE 38, l. 31.

THE sittings of the three Things referred to took place under the following dates:

The most thronged, following the burning of Njal and his sons, took place A.D. 1012.

The next in time and point of multitude was that at which the so-called Heath-slaughters were atoned for, A.D. 1015.

The last in point of multitude, but first in time, was that mentioned in our Saga, which took place in 1006.

INDEX TO THE STORY OF GUNN- LAUG THE WORM-TONGUE

The number signifies the page.

A GDANESS in Norway	31
Althing, the Parliament of Iceland	10, 29, 36, 38, 45
Ari Thorgilson, the Learned, the father of Icelandic history and the reputed author of the story of Gunnlaug the Worm-tongue	7
As, a farmstead in Waterdale, in Northern Iceland	16
Asbiorn of Ornofsdale, son of Hord	13
Asgerd, daughter of Biorn Hold, mother of Thorstein Egilson	7
Atli of Foxholes, a farmer	8
Audun Festargram	16, 19, 21
Axewater, the river running through the plains of Thingvellir	37, 38
Bardi, see Slaying-Bardi	
Bergfinn, master of a Norwegian trading ship	8
Biorn, the champion of Hitdale, son of Arngeir	7
Biorn, kinsman of Onund of Mossfell	45
Board-ere, a cheaping-stead in Ramfirth	46
Burg, a homestead in Burgfirth	7, 14, 15, 17, 18, 30, 33, 34
Burgfirth	12, 33
Burgfirthers	8
Denmark	21, 30
Dingness in Sweden	41, 42
Dublin	24
East-men = Norwegians	8
Egil Skallagrimson	7, 18
Egil, son of Thorstein Egilson	8
Einar Skulison	7
Eindridi, son of Onund of Mossfell	15
X.M	161

England	21, 23, 24, 30
Eric, earl of Norway, son of earl Hakon	19, 20, 25, 26, 31, 41
Eric the Victorious, king of Sweden	26
Ethelred, son of Edgar, king of England	21-3, 30
Eyjolf, son of Thorfin of Red-Mel	15
Foxholes, farmstead in Burgfirth under Hawkfell	8
Fox-Plain	32, 40
Freedmans-stead, a farmstead in Hvamfirth	11
Galti of Hreda-water, son of Ottar, brother to Hallfred	33
Geirny, daughter of Gnup, wife of Onund of Mossfell	15
Gilsbank, a farmstead in Burgfirth	12, 15, 18, 20, 33, 39, 44, 45
Gleipni's meads, in Sweden	42
Gnup, son of Mold-Gnup, grandfather of Raven the Skald	15
Gothlanders	26
Grim, sister's-son of Onund of Mossfell	40, 42
Grimstongue, a farmstead in Waterdale, in the North country	16
Grindwick, a countryside in South-West Iceland	15
Gufaros, name of a river-mouth in Burgfirth	8, 16
Gunnar of Lithend, the son of Hamund	7
Gunnar, the son of Hlifar	7
Gunnlaug Worm-tongue, the great-grandfather of Gunnlaug, the hero of the story	12
GUNNLAUG WORM-TONGUE, son of Illugi the Black	13, 14, 15-46
Hafr-Biorn, son of Mold-Gnup	33, 36-8
Hakon, earl of Norway	19, 20
Hallfred, Troublous-scald, son of Ottar	31-3, 40
Hallkel, father of Thorkel of Hraundale	46
Hallkel, son of Hrosskel, grandfather of Gunnlaug Worm-tongue, jun.	12
Harald, see Strut-Harald	

Hawkfell, a mountain in Burgfirth	8
Heath, i.e. Mossfells-Heath	28
Heath-slaughters	38
HELGA the FAIR, daughter of Thorstein Egilson	
	12, 14, 17-9, 29-40, 44, 46-7
Heming, son of Strut-Harald, chief over a Danish army in England	30
Herdholt, a farmstead in Laxriverdale	11
Hermund, son of Illugi the Black	13, 36-8, 46
Hill of Laws (Lög-berg), a lava-rock at Thingvellir, surrounded by deep rifts on all but one side, on which the laws were given out, and judgments at law were passed	36, 45
Hjalli, a farmstead in the countryside called Olfus in Southern Iceland	15
Hladir, seat of the earls of Norway	19, 31, 41-2
Hlodver, father of earl Sigurd of Orkney	25
Holtbeacon-Heath, a mountain dividing Burgfirth from Ramfirth	46-7
Hoskuld, father of Olaf Peacock	11
Hraundale, a farmstead in Burgfirth	46
Hraunhaven, a harbour in Fox-Plain	32
Hreda-water, a farmstead in Northwater-dale in Burgfirth	33
Hungerd, daughter of Thorod, the son of Odd of Tongue	8, 33
Iceland	14, 15, 20, 25, 27, 28, 30-1, 38, 40, 44
Illugi the Black, son of Hallkel	12, 13, 15-18, 29, 33, 34, 36, 37, 44-6
Ingibiorg, daughter of Asbiorn Hordson, wife of Illugi the Black, and mother of Gunnlaug Worm-tongue, jun.	13
Ireland	24
Jofrid, daughter of Gunnar, the wife of Thorstein Egilson	7, 8, 10, 11, 33
Kiartan, son of Olaf Peacock	7, 16
King's Cliff, a stead in Norway	25
M2	163

Knut the Great, son of Svein, king of Denmark	30
Kollsvein (Kolsvein, 36), son of Thorstein Egilson	8, 36
Kormlada, Queen	24
Laxdale-men	16
Leiruvag, a harbour	28-40
Lifangr, a stead in Thrandheim	40, 42, 44
Lodver, see Hlodver	
London	21
London Bridge	21
Longwater-dale	17
Mere-men, a famous family in Burgfirth	7
Meres, a countryside in Burgfirth	18
Midfirth-Skeggi	13
Mossfell, a farmstead	15, 33, 36, 45
Nidaros, mod. Thronhjøm, the ancient capital of Norway	19
Njal	38
Northwater-dale, a valley in Burgfirth	33
Norway	7, 19, 21, 25, 27, 31, 33, 39, 41, 46
Norwegians	26
Odd, the son of Onund, called Odd of Tongue	8
Olaf Kvaran	24
Olaf Peacock	7, 11
Olaf, sister's-son of Onund of Mossfell	40, 42
Olaf the Swede, son of Eric, the victorious king of Sweden	26-8, 30
Onund of Mossfell, father of Raven the Skald	15, 31, 36, 40, 45-6
Onund Sioni	18
Orkney	25, 40
Ornolfsdale, a farmstead	13
Plain, see Fox-Plain	
Ramfirth	46
Ranveig, daughter of Gnup, mother of Skapti, the Spokesman-at-law	15
RAVEN, son of Onund of Mossfell	15, 27-8, 30-45

Raven, nephew of Onund of Mossfell	46
Scotland	41
Selthorir, son of Grim	15
Shell-creek	11
Sigrid the High-counselled, daughter of Skogul-Tosti	26
Sigtrygg Silky-beard, king of Dublin, son of Olaf Kvaran	24, 34
Sigurd, earl of West Gothland	25-6
Sigurd, son of Hlodver, earl of Orkney	25, 40-1
Sigvaldi, an earl, son of Strut-Harald	30
Skallagrim, son of Kveldulf	7
Skaney, a farmstead in Burgfirth	33
Skapti, Spokesman-at-law, son of Thorod of Hjalli	15, 29, 36-7
Skarir, a cheaping-stead in West Gothland in Sweden	25
Skogul-Tosti	26
Skuli, son of Thorstein Egilson	7, 8, 19, 21
Slaying-Bardi, son of Gudmund	7
Snorri Sturluson, the famous historian	7
South-isles, i.e. Hebrides	41
Steinar, son of Onund Sioni	18
Steingrimsfirth	11
Steinthor of Ere, the son of Thorlak	8
Strut-Harald, earl	30
Sula, a farm in Sweden	42
Svein, earl, son of earl Hakon	19
Svein, king of Denmark	30
Sverting, son of Hafr-Biorn	33, 36-8
Sweden	25-7, 30, 42
Tenthland, a province of Sweden	26
Thor, the god of war and thunder	32
Thorarin, son of Onund of Mossfell	15
Thorarin, son of Thorkel of Hraundale and Helga the Fair	46
Thord, a bonder's son in Fox-Plain	32
Thord, son of Kolbein, a poet, wrote a song on Gunnlaug the Worm-tongue	43

Thorfin of Red-Mel, son of Selthorir	15-18
Thorgerd, daughter of Egil Skallagrimson	11
Thorgerd, daughter of Midfirth-Skeggi, grandmother of Gunnlaug Worm-tongue	13
Thorgils, son of Thorfin of Red-Mel	15
Thorgils-stead	17
Thorgrim the priest, son of Kiallak	18
Thorgrim, kinsman of Onund of Mossfell	45
Thorir, court-man of earl Eric	20
Thorir, son of Thorfin of Red-Mel	15
Thorkel of Hraundale, son of Hallkel, second husband of Helga the Fair	46-7
Thorkel the Black, kinsman of Illugi the Black, a house- carle of Gilsbank and Gunnlaug Worm-tongue's constant companion	15, 17, 21, 25, 41, 42-3
Thorkel of Skaney, son of Torfi, son of Valbrand	33, 34
Thorsness Thing	18
Thorod the Sage of Hjalli, son of Eyvind	15
Thorod, son of Odd of Tongue	8, 33
Thorodda, daughter of Onund, sister to Odd of Tongue	33
Thororm, a vagabond and viking	22
Thorstein, son of Egil the son of Skallagrim, 7-14, 17, 29, 34, 36	
Thorstein, son of Thorkel of Hraundale and Helga the Fair	46
Thorvard, shepherd to Jofrid	11
Thrandheim, a province of Norway	19, 28, 31, 40
Thurid Dandle, daughter of Gunnlaug the Worm- tongue, sen.	12
Torfi, son of Valbrand	33
Tosti, see Skogul-Tosti	
Upsala	26
Veradale in Norway	42
Waterdale, a countryside in Northern Iceland	16
West Gothland, a province of Sweden	25
Whitewater-side, a countryside in Burgfirth	12
William the Bastard	21

INDEX TO THE STORIES OF FRITH- IOF THE BOLD, VIGLUND THE FAIR, HOGNI & HEDINN, ROI THE FOOL, AND THORSTEIN STAFF-SMITTEN

A EGIS-HELM	138
Aesir	127
Alfarin, son of Vali, father to Holmkel of Foss	90
Alfrigg	127
Angantyr, earl of Orkney	64-7, 71
Asgard	127
Asia (Asia-land and Asia-home)	127
Asmund, Frithiof's foster-brother	49-50, 67
Atli, a viking in Orkney	65
Baldur the god	48
Baldur's Meads, a templestead	48, 52
Bardi, the Snowfell sprite	98
Bath-brent, a homestead,	90
Beli, king of Sogn in Norway	48-9
Berling	127
Biarni, goodman of Hof	151
Biorn, Frithiof's foster-brother	49, 50, 52, 56, 67
Biorn of the Billows, a homeman of Thorgrim the Proud	97
Bodvarsdale	153
Daymealness	98
Denmark	130
Dwalin	127
Effia Sound	63
Einar of Bath-brent	90
Einar, son of Holmkel	90, 92, 100
Elfhome, a petty kingship in Norway	66
Elfskerries, skerries in the mouth of the river Gotha	129
Ellidi (Ellida, 130), Frithiof's good vessel	49, 50, 53
	167

England	144
Eric, earl of Rogaland in Norway	83, 110
Eric, king of Sweden	142
Erlend, son of King Erling of Upland	129
Erling, king of Upland in Norway	129
Erne	119-125
Esja-tarn	102
Farbauti	128
Finnsteads	131
Foreness, the abode of Thorstein Vikingson	50, 56, 67
Foss, a farmstead on Snowfellness, Iceland	90, 100
Frey, the god	127
Freyia, goddess, the daughter of Niord	127-9
FRITHIOF THE BOLD, son of Thorstein	48-80
Frodaroyce, a harbour	100
Gaut of Gautwick	111
Gautwick, homestead in Eastern Iceland	111, 119
Gnod, a vessel	130
Gondul, a valkyrja	132, 135
Goti, son of Alfarin	90
Gotisbrook, a farmstead	90
Grerr	127
Grief-ham	72-3
Grim	86
Gunnlaug the Masterful, son of Ketil of Raumrealm	82, 99
Gunnthiof, son of Frithiof and Ingibjorg	80
Ha (the High Isle, now Hoy in Orkney)	136
Haki, a sea-king	129
Hakon the Eastman	99-102
Hakon, son of King Halfdan of Denmark	130
Halfdan, son of King Beli	48-80
Halfdan the Black	81
Halfdan, king of Denmark	130
Halfdan's-loom, a ship	136

Hallward, a watch at earl Angantyr's	64
Hamglom, a witch	56
Harald Fairhair, king of Norway	81-3, 87, 110
Hardfellow	114
Hauskuld, son of Alfarin	90
Hauskuldstead, a farmhouse	90
Heathwood	137
Hedinn, son of Hiarandi, king of Serkland	132, 138
Heidi, a witchwife	56
Heidrek, son of Wolfskin, father to Hiorvard	133
Helga, daughter of Thorgrim the Proud	91
Helgi, a court-man of the Swedish king	142
Helgi, son of King Beli	48, 49, 50, 51, 55, 68, 79
Helgi, son of earl Eric	84, 110, 125
Hervor, daughter of Hiorvard, wife to Hogni	133
Hiarandi, king of Serkland	132
Hild, daughter of Hogni	133
Hilding, a goodman of Sogn, Frithiof's and Ingibjorg's fosterer	48, 51
Hiorvard, son of Heidrek, father to Hervor	133
Hof, a farmstead in Eastern Iceland	151
Hogni, son of King Halfdan of Denmark	130
Holmkel of Foss, son of Alfarin	90, 100
Holmkel's River	90
Hordaland, petty kingship of Norway	80
Hraundale	111
Hraunhaven	90
Hraunskard	96
Hunthiof, son of Frithiof and Ingibjorg	80
Hvedna the Old, wife of King Halfdan of Denmark	130
Iceland	90
Ingiald, son of Alfarin	90
Ingialdsknoll, a stead	90, 100
INGIBJORG, daughter of King Beli, Frithiof's wife	48, 50
Ingibjorg, wife of Ketil of Raumrealm	82, 88
Ingibjorg, daughter of Ketil of Raumrealm	99, 115
	169

Iron-shield of Heathwood	137
Ivar Gleam-bright	137
Jadar, a province of Norway	52
Jokul, son of Holmkel of Foss	90, 92, 100
Ketil Raum, ruler of Raumrealm	82, 86, 99
Ketilrid, daughter of Holmkel of Foss	90
Kiolvor, a witch-wife	96
Laufey, wife of Farbauti	128
Loki the Sly, a god	128-9
Long-worm, a famous ship	130
Mound-knowes	109
Niord, a god	127
Normandy	144
Odin	127
Odins-isle	131
Olaf Tryggvison	137
Olof Sunbeam	81, 86
Onverdaness	110
Orkney	55, 71
Paris-town	131
Peace-Frodi, king of Denmark	129
Ragnhild, daughter of Helgi	110, 126
Ran, goddess of the sea	61
Rannveig, wife of Biarni of Hof	155
Raumrealm, principality in Norway	82
Raumsdale, a countryside of Norway	115
Raven	119
Ring, king of Ringrealm	51, 54, 66, 71
Ringrealm, petty kingdom of Norway	51
Rogaland, petty kingdom of Norway	83

ROI THE FOOL	140
Roi's-well, ancient capital of Denmark	130
Sævar, Sorli's Forecastle-man	130
Samsey	144
Serkland	132
Sigmund, son of earl Eric	84, 110
Sigrbiorg, daughter of the Swedish lawman Thorgnyr	145
Sigurd	85
Sigurd, brother of Roi the Fool	148
Sigurd the Sage, son of Ketil of Raumrealm	82, 99, 114, 116
Sindri, son of Sveigr, a viking	129
Skeggbroddi, son of Biarni	158
Snowfell-Jokul	118
Snowfellness, in Iceland	90, 110
Sogn, a petty kingdom of Norway	48
Sognfirth in Norway	56, 70
Sokn-Sound	52
Solundir, islands outside the mouth of Sognfirth	56
Sorli the Strong, son of King Erling of Upland	129
Sowstrand, residence of King Beli	48, 67, 71
Spain	132
Steinolf of Hraundale	111
Streitaland, seat of King Ring	72
Sunnudale	151
Sveigr, son of Haki, father to Sindri the viking	129
Sweden	142
Swein Twibeard, son of Harald, king of Denmark	140
Thief	72
Thorarin of Sunnudale	151
Thorbiorg, daughter of Einar, wife of Holmkel of Foss	90, 100
Thord from the Eastfirths	116
Thord, house-carle of Biarni of Hof	151
Thorgils, brother of Helgi the court-man of the Swedish king	144

Thorgnyr, the Swedish lawman	145
Thorgrim the Proud, love-born son of earl Eric	84-90
Thorhall, house-carle of Biarni of Hof	151
Thorir, hersir of Sogn	81, 85
Thorir, brother of Helgi and Thorgils	149
Thorkel Skinhood of Daymealness	98
Thorleif, son of Steinolf of Hraundale	111, 116
Thorsness-thing	109
Thorstein, son of Iron-shield of Heathwood	137
THORSTEIN STAFF-SMITTEN, son of Thorarin	151
Thorstein Vikingson, father to Frithiof the Bold	48, 49, 65
Thorvald, a house-carle of Biarni of Hof	151
Troubleman	114
Trusty, son of Thorgrim the Proud	90
Uplands, a province of Norway	71, 129
Vali, father to Alfarin	90
Valeri, a burg near Rome-town	158
Vanaquisl	127
VIGLUND THE FAIR, son of Thorgrim the Proud	90-126
White-water, a river in Western Iceland	117
Wick (the), a province in Norway	71
Wolf	72
Wolfskin, father of Heidrek	133

THE ARGUMENT

HROTHGAR, king of the Danes, lives happily and peacefully, and bethinks him to build a glorious hall called Hart. But a little after, one Grendel, of the kindred of the evil wights that are come of Cain, hears the merry noise of Hart and cannot abide it; so he enters thereinto by night, and slays and carries off and devours thirty of Hrothgar's thanes. Thereby he makes Hart waste for twelve years, and the tidings of this mishap are borne wide about lands. Then comes to the helping of Hrothgar Beowulf, the son of Ecgtheow, athane of King Hygelac of the Geats, with fourteen fellows. They are met on the shore by the landwarder, and by him shown to Hart and the stead of Hrothgar, who receives them gladly, and to whom Beowulf tells his errand, that he will help him against Grendel. They feast in the hall, and one Unferth, son of Ecglaf, taunts Beowulf through jealousy that he was outdone by Breca in swimming. Beowulf tells the true tale thereof. And a little after, at nightfall, Hrothgar and his folk leave the hall Hart, and it is given in charge to Beowulf, who with his Geats abides there the coming of Grendel.

Soon comes Grendel to the hall, and slays a man of the Geats, hight Handshoe, and then grapples with Beowulf, who will use no weapon against him: Grendel feels himself over-mastered and makes for the door, and gets out, but leaves his hand and arm behind him with Beowulf: men on the wall hear the great noise of this battle and the wailing of Grendel. In the morning the Danes rejoice, and follow the bloody slot of Grendel, and return to Hart racing and telling old tales, as of Sigemund and the Worm. Then come the king and his thanes to look on the token of victory, Grendel's hand and arm, which Beowulf has let fasten to the hall-gable.

The king praises Beowulf and rewards him, and they feast in Hart, and the tale of Finn and Hengest is told. Then Hrothgar leaves Hart, and so does Beowulf also with his Geats, but the Danes keep guard there.

Beowulf

In the night comes in Grendel's Mother, and catches up Aeschere, a thane of Hrothgar, and carries him off to her lair. In the morning is Beowulf fetched to Hrothgar, who tells him of this new grief and craves his help.

Then they follow up the slot and come to a great water-side, and find thereby Aeschere's head, and the place is known for the lair of those two: monsters are playing in the deep, and Beowulf shoots one of them to death. Then Beowulf dights him and leaps into the water, and is a day's while reaching the bottom. There he is straightway caught hold of by Grendel's Mother, who bears him into her hall. When he gets free he falls on her, but the edge of the sword Hrunting (lent to him by Unferth) fails him, and she casts him to the ground and draws her sax to slay him; but he rises up, and sees an old sword of the giants hanging on the wall; he takes it and smites off her head therewith. He sees Grendel lying dead, and his head also he strikes off; but the blade of the sword is molten in his venomous blood. Then Beowulf strikes upward, taking with him the head of Grendel and the hilts of the sword. When he comes to the shore he finds his Geats there alone; for the Danes fled when they saw the blood floating in the water.

They go up to Hrothgar's stead, and four men must needs bear the head. They come to Hrothgar, and Beowulf gives him the hilts and tells him what he has done. Much praise is given to Beowulf; and they feast together.

On the morrow Beowulf bids farewell to Hrothgar, more gifts are given, and messages are sent to Hygelac: Beowulf departs with the full love of Hrothgar. The Geats come to their ship and reward the ship-warder, and put off and sail to their own land. Beowulf comes to Hygelac's house. Hygelac is told of, and his wife Hygd, and her good conditions, against whom is set as a warning the evil Queen Thrytho.

Beowulf tells all the tale of his doings in full to Hygelac, and gives him his gifts, and the precious-gemmed collar to Hygd. Here is told of Beowulf, and how he was contemned in his youth, and is now grown so renowned.

Time wears; Hygelac is slain in battle; Heardred, his son, reigns in his stead, he is slain by the Swedes, and Beowulf is made king. When he is grown old, and has been king for fifty years, come new tidings. A great dragon finds on the sea-shore a mound wherein is stored the treasure of ancient folk departed. The said dragon abides there, and broods the gold for 300 years.

Now a certain thrall, who had misdane against his lord and was fleeing from his wrath, haps on the said treasure and takes a cup thence, which he brings to his lord to appease his wrath. The Worm waketh, and findeth his treasure lessened, but can find no man who hath done the deed. Therefore he turns on the folk, and wars on them, and burns Beowulf's house.

Now Beowulf will go and meet the Worm. He has an iron shield made, and sets forth with eleven men and the thrall the thirteenth. He comes to the ness, and speaks to his men, telling them of his past days, and gives them his last greeting: then he cries out a challenge to the Worm, who comes forth, and the battle begins: Beowulf's sword will not bite on the Worm. Wiglaf eggs on the others to come to Beowulf's help, and goes himself straightway, and offers himself to Beowulf; the Worm comes on again, and Beowulf breaks his sword Nægling on him, and the Worm wounds Beowulf. Wiglaf smites the Worm in the belly; Beowulf draws his sax, and between them they slay the Worm.

Beowulf now feels his wounds, and knows that he is hurt deadly; he sits down by the wall, and Wiglaf bathes his wounds. Beowulf speaks, tells how he would give his armour to his son if he had one; thanks God that he has not sworn falsely or done guilefully; and prays Wiglaf to bear out the treasure that he may see it before he dies.

Wiglaf fetches out the treasure, and again bathes Beowulf's wounds; Beowulf speaks again, rejoices over the sight of the treasure; gives to Wiglaf his ring and his armour, and bids the manner of his bale-fire. With that he passes away. Now the dastards come thereto and find Wiglaf vainly bath-

Beowulf ing his dead lord. He casteth shame upon them with great wrath. Thence he sends a messenger to the barriers of the town, who comes to the host, and tells them of the death of Beowulf. He tells withal of the old feud betwixt the Geats and the Swedes, and how these, when they hear of the death of the king, will be upon them. The warriors go to look on Beowulf, and find him and the Worm lying dead together. Wiglaf chooses out seven of them to go void the treasure-house, after having bidden them gather wood for the bale-fire. They shove the Worm over the cliff into the sea, and bear off the treasure in wains. Then they bring Beowulf's corpse to bale, and they kindle it; a woman called the wife of aforetime, it may be Hygd, widow of Hygelac, bemoans him: and twelve children of the athelings ride round the bale, and bemoan Beowulf and praise him: and thus ends the poem.

THE STORY OF BEOWULF

I. AND FIRST OF THE KINDRED OF HROTHGAR.

WHAT! we of the Spear-Danes of yore days, so was it
That we learn'd of the fair fame of kings of the folks
And the Athelings a-faring in framing of valour.

Oft then Scyld the Sheaf-son from the hosts of the scathers,
From kindreds a many the mead-settles tore;
It was then the earl fear'd them, sithence was he first
Found bare and all-lacking; so solace he bided,
Wax'd under the welkin in worship to thrive,
Until it was so that the round-about sitters
All over the whale-road must hearken his will
And yield him the tribute. A good king was that.

By whom then thereafter a son was begotten,
A youngling in garth, whom the great God sent thither
To foster the folk; and their crime-need he felt
The load that lay on them while lordless they lived
For a long while and long. He therefore, the Life-lord,
The Wielder of glory, world's worship he gave him:
Brim Beowulf waxed, and wide the weal upsprang
Of the offspring of Scyld in the parts of the Scede-lands.
Such wise shall a youngling with wealth be a-working
With goodly fee-gifts toward the friends of his father,
That after in eld-days shall ever bide with him,
Fair fellows well-willing when wendeth the war-tide,
Their lief lord a-serving. By praise-deeds it shall be
That in each and all kindreds a man shall have thriving.

Then went his ways Scyld when the shapen while was,
All hardy to wend him to the Lord and his warding:
Out then did they bear him to the side of the sea-flood,
The dear fellows of him, as he himself pray'd them
While yet his word wielded the friend of the Scyldings,
The dear lord of the land; a long while had he own'd it.
With stem all be-ringed at the hythe stood the ship,
All icy and out-fain, the Athelings' ferry.

Beowulf the
Scylding, not
Beowulf the
Geat, of whom
is told this tale

The Death
of Scyld

Beowulf

There then did they lay him, the lord well beloved,
The gold-rings' bestower, within the ship's barm,
The Mighty by mast. Much there was the treasure,
From far ways forsooth had the fret-work been led:
Never heard I of keel that was comelier dighted
With weapons of war, and with weed of the battle,
With bills and with byrnies. There lay in his barm
Much wealth of the treasure that with him should be,
And he into the flood's might afar to depart.
No lesser a whit were the wealth-goods they dight him
Of the goods of the folk, than did they who aforetime,
When was the beginning, first sent him away
Alone o'er the billows, and he but a youngling.
Moreover they set him up there a sign golden
High up overhead, and let the holm bear him,
Gave all to the Spearman. Sad mind they had in them,
And mourning their mood was. Now never knew men,
For sooth how to say it, rede-masters in hall,
Or heroes 'neath heaven, to whose hands came the lading.

Spearman, i. e.
the Sea-god

Of Healfdene
son of Beowulf
the Scylding;
and of Healf-
dene's children;
of whom was
Hrothgar

II. CONCERNING HROTHGAR, AND HOW HE BUILT THE HOUSE CALLED HART. ALSO GRENDEL IS TOLD OF.

IN the burgs then was bidding Beowulf the Scylding,
Dear King of the people, for long was he dwelling
Far-famed of folks (his father turn'd elsewhere,
From his stead the Chief wended) till awoke to him after
Healfdene the high, and long while he held it,
Ancient and war-eager, o'er the glad Scyldings:
Of his body four bairns are forth to him rimed;
Into the world woke the leader of war-hosts
Heorogar; eke Hrothgar, and Halga the good;
Heard I that Elan queen was she of Ongentheow,
That Scylding of battle, the bed-mate behalsed.

Then was unto Hrothgar the war-speed given,
Such worship of war that his kin and well-willers

Well hearken'd his will till the younglings were waxen,
 A kin-host a many. Then into his mind ran
 That he would be building for him now a hall-house,
 That men should be making a mead-hall more mighty
 Than the children of ages had ever heard tell of:
 And there within eke should he be out-dealing
 To young and to old all things God had given,
 Save the share of the Folk and the life-days of men.
 Then heard I that widely the work was a-banning
 To kindreds a many the Middle-garth over,
 To fret o'er that folk-stead. So befell to him timely
 Right soon among men that made was it yarely
 The most of hall-houses, and Hart its name shap'd he,
 Who wielded his word full widely around,
 His behest he belied not; it was he dealt the rings,
 The wealth at the high-tide.

Beowulf

Of the building
 of the Hall
 called Hart

Then up rose the hall-house,
 High up and horn-gabled. Hot surges it bided
 Of fire-flame the loathly, nor long was it thenceforth
 Ere sorely the edge-hate 'twixt Son and Wife's Father
 After the slaughter-strife there should awaken.

Then the ghost heavy-strong bore with it hardly
 E'en for a while of time, bider in darkness,
 That there on each day of days heard he the mirth-tide
 Loud in the hall-house. There was the harp's voice,
 And clear song of shaper. Said he who could it
 To tell the first fashion of men from aforetime;
 Quoth how the Almighty One made the Earth's fashion,
 The fair field and bright midst the bow of the Waters,
 And with victory beglory'd set Sun and Moon,
 Bright beams to enlighten the biders on land:
 And how he adorned all parts of the earth
 With limbs and with leaves; and life withal shaped
 For the kindred of each thing that quick on earth wendeth.

So liv'd on all happy the host of the kinsmen
 In game and in glee, until one wight began,
 A fiend out of hell-pit, the framing of evil,

Of Grendel

Beowulf

And Grendel forsooth the grim guest was hight,
The mighty mark-strider, the holder of moorland,
The fen and the fastness. The stead of the fifel
That wight all unhappy a while of time warded,
Sithence that the Shaper him had for-written.

Grendel's ill
deeds

On the kindred of Cain the Lord living ever
Awreaked the murder of the slaying of Abel.
In that feud he rejoic'd not, but afar him He banish'd,
The Maker, from mankind for the crime he had wrought.
But offspring uncouth thence were they awoken,
Eotens and elf-wights, and ogres of ocean,
And therewith the Giants, who won war against God
A long while; but He gave them their wages therefor.

III. HOW GRENDDEL FELL UPON HART AND WASTED IT.

NOW went he a-spying, when come was the night-tide,
The house on high builded, and how there the Ring-Danes,
Their beer-drinking over had bouned them to bed;
And therein he found them, the atheling fellows,
Asleep after feasting. Then sorrow they knew not
Nor the woe of mankind: but the wight of wealth's waning,
The grim and the greedy, soon yare was he gotten,
All furious and fierce, and he raught up from resting
A thirty of thanes, and thence aback got him
Right fain of his gettings, and homeward to fare,
Fulfilled of slaughter his stead to go look on.

Heavy days on
the Scyldings

Thereafter at dawning, when day was yet early,
The war-craft of Grendel to men grew unhidden,
And after his meal was the weeping uphoven,
Mickle voice of the morning-tide: there the Prince mighty,
The Atheling exceeding good, unblithe he sat,
Tholing the heavy woe;thane-sorrow dreed he
Since the slot of the loathly wight there they had look'd on,
The ghost all accursed. O'er grisly the strife was,
So loathly and longsome. No longer the frist was

But after the wearing of one night; then fram'd he
 Murder-bales more yet, and nowise he mourned
 The feud and the crime ; over fast therein was he.
 Then easy to find was the man who would elsewhere
 Seek out for himself a rest was more roomsome,
 Beds end-long the bowers, when beacon'd to him was,
 And soothly out told by manifest token,
 The hate of the hell-thane. He held himself sithence
 Further and faster who from the fiend gat him.

In such wise he rul'd it and wrought against right,
 But one against all, until idle was standing
 The best of hall-houses; and mickle the while was,
 Twelve winter-tides' wearing; and trouble he tholed,
 That friend of the Scyldings, of woes every one
 And wide-spreading sorrows: for sithence it fell
 That unto men's children unhidden 'twas known
 Full sadly in singing, that Grendel won war
 'Gainst Hrothgar a while of time, hate-envy waging,
 And crime-guilts and feud for seasons no few,
 And strife without stinting. For the sake of no kindness
 Unto any of men of the main-host of Dane-folk
 Would he thrust off the life-bale, or by fee-gild allay it,
 Nor was there a wise man that needed to ween
 The bright boot to have at the hand of the slayer.
 The monster the fell one afflicted them sorely,
 That death-shadow darksome the doughty and youthful
 Enfetter'd, ensnared; night by night was he faring
 The moorlands the misty. But never know men
 Of spell-workers of Hell to and fro where they wander.
 So crime-guilts a many the foeman of mankind,
 The fell alone-farer, fram'd oft and full often,
 Cruel hard shames and wrongful, and Hart he abode in,
 The treasure-stain'd hall, in the dark of the night-tide;
 But never the gift-stool therein might he greet,
 The treasure before the Creator he throw'd not.

Mickle wrack was it soothly for the Friend of the Scyldings,
 Yea heart and mood breaking. Now sat there a many

Beowulf

The Scyldings
take counsel
and pray the
Gods

Of the mighty in rune, and won them the rede
Of what thing for the strong-soul'd were best of all things
Which yet they might frame 'gainst the fear and the horror.
And whiles they behight them at the shrines of the heathen
To worship the idols; and pray'd they in words,
That he, the ghost-slayer, would frame for them helping
'Gainst the folk-threats and evil. So far'd they their wont,
The hope of the heathen; nor hell they remember'd
In mood and in mind. And the Maker they knew not,
The Doomer of deeds: nor of God the Lord wist they,
Nor the Helm of the Heavens knew aught how to hery,
The Wielder of Glory.

Woe worth unto that man
Who through hatred the baneful his soul shall shove into
The fire's embrace; nought of fostering weens he,
Nor of changing one whit. But well is he soothly
That after the death-day shall seek to the Lord,
In the breast of the Father all peace ever craving.

IV. NOW COMES BEOWULF ECGTHEOW'S SON TO THE LAND OF THE DANES, AND THE WALL-WARDEN SPEAKETH WITH HIM.

SO care that was time-long the kinsman of Healfdene
Still seeth'd without ceasing, nor might the wise warrior,
Wend elsewhere woe, for o'er strong was the strife
All loathly so longsome late laid on the people,
Need-wrack and grim nothing, of night-bales the greatest.

Now that from his home heard the Hygelac's thane,
Good midst of the Geat-folk; of Grendel's deeds heard he.
But he was of mankind of might and main mightiest
In the day that we tell of, the day of this life,
All noble, strong-waxen.

Beowulf
will fare to
Hrothgar

He bade a wave-wearer
Right good to be gear'd him, and quoth he that the war-king
Over the swan-road he would be seeking,
The folk-lord far-famed, since lack of men had he.

Forsooth of that faring the carles wiser-fashion'd
 Laid little blame on him, though lief to them was he;
 The heart-hardy whetted they, heeded the omen.
 There had the good one, e'en he of the Geat-folk,
 Champions out-chosen of them that he keenest
 Might find for his needs; and he then the fifteenth
 Sought to the sound-wood. A swain thereon show'd him,
 A sea-crafty man, all the make of the land-marks.

Beowulf

Wore then a while, on the waves was the floater,
 The boat under the berg, and yare then the warriors
 Strode up on the stem; the streams were a-winding
 The sea 'gainst the sands. Upbore the swains then
 Up into the bark's barm the bright-fretted weapons,
 The war-array stately; then out the lads shov'd her,
 The folk on the welcome way shov'd out the wood-bound.
 Then by the wind driven out o'er the wave-holm
 Far'd the foamy-neck'd floater most like to a fowl,
 Till when was the same tide of the second day's wearing
 The wound-about-stemm'd one had waded her way,
 So that then they that sail'd her had sight of the land,
 Bleak shine of the sea-cliffs, bergs steep up above,
 Sea-nesses wide reaching; the sound was won over,
 The sea-way was ended: then up ashore swiftly
 The band of the Weder-folk up on earth wended;
 They bound up the sea-wood, their sarks on them rattled,
 Their weed of the battle, and God there they thanked
 For that easy the wave-ways were waxen unto them.

The Geats
 make land

But now from the wall saw the Scylding-folks' warder,
 E'en he who the holm-cliffs should ever be holding,
 Men bear o'er the gangway the bright shields a-shining,
 Folk-host gear all ready. Then mind-longing wore him,
 And stirr'd up his mood to wot who were the men-folk.
 So shoreward down far'd he his fair steed a-riding,
 Hrothgar's Thane, and full strongly then set he a-quaking
 The stark wood in his hands, and in council-speech speer'd he:

Of the Land-
 warden and
 Beowulf

“What men be ye then of them that have war-gear,

Beowulf

With byrnies bewarded, who the keel high up-builed
Over the lake-street thus have come leading,
Hither o'er holm-ways hieing in ring-stem?
End-sitter was I, a-holding the sea-ward,
That the land of the Dane-folk none of the loathly
Faring with ship-horde ever might scathe it.
None yet have been seeking more openly hither
Of shield-havers than ye, and ye of the leave-word
Of the framers of war naught at all wotting,
Or the manners of kinsmen. But no man of earls greater
Saw I ever on earth than one of you yonder,
The warrior in war-gear: no hall-man, so ween I,
Is that weapon-beworthy'd, but his visage belie him,
The sight seen once only. Now I must be wotting
The spring of your kindred ere further ye cast ye,
And let loose your false spies in the Dane-land a-faring
Yet further afield. So now, ye far-dwellers,
Ye wenders o'er sea-flood, this word do ye hearken
Of my one-folded thought: and haste is the handiest
To do me to wit of whence is your coming."

V. HERE BEOWULF MAKES ANSWER TO THE
LAND-WARDEN, WHO SHOWETH HIM THE
WAY TO THE KING'S ABODE.

HE then that was chiefest in thus wise he answer'd,
The war-fellows' leader unlock'd he the word-hoard:
"We be a people of the Weder-Geats' man-kin,
And of Hygelac be we the hearth-fellows soothly.
My father before me of folks was well-famed
Van-leader and atheling, Ecgtheow he hight.
Many winters abode he, and on the way wended
An old man from the garths, and him well remembers
Every wise man well nigh wide yond o'er the earth.
Through our lief mood and friendly the lord that is thine,
Even Healfdene's son, are we now come a-seeking,
Thy warder of folk. Learn us well with thy leading,

For we have to the mighty an errand full mickle,
 To the lord of the Dane-folk: naught dark shall it be,
 That ween I full surely. If it be so thou wottest,
 As soothly for our parts we now have heard say,
 That one midst of the Scyldings, who of scathers I wot not,
 A deed-hater secret, in the dark of the night-tide
 Setteth forth through the terror the malice untold of,
 The shame-wrong and slaughter. I therefore to Hirothgar
 Through my mind fashion'd roomsome the rede may now
 learn him,

Beowulf

How he, old-wise and good, may get the fiend under,
 If once more from him awayward may turn
 The business of bales, and the boot come again,
 And the weltering of care wax cooler once more;
 Or for ever sithence time of stress he shall thole,
 The need and the wronging, the while yet there abideth
 On the high stead aloft the best of all houses."

Then spake out the warden on steed there a-sitting,
 The servant all un-fear'd: "It shall be of either
 That the shield-warrior sharp the sundering wotteth
 Of words and of works, if he think thereof well.
 I heard it thus said that this host here is friendly
 To the lord of the Scyldings; forth fare ye then, bearing
 Your weed and your weapons, of the way will I wisse you;
 Likewise mine own kinsmen I will now be bidding
 Against every foeman your floater before us,
 Your craft but new-tarred, the keel on the sand,
 With honour to hold, until back shall be bearing
 Over the lake-streams this one, the lief man,
 The wood of the wunden-neck back unto Wedermark.
 Unto such shall be granted amongst the good-doers
 To win the way out all whole from the war-race."

The Geats
 come a-land

Then boun they to faring, the bark bidding quiet;
 Hung upon hawser the wide-fathom'd ship
 Fast at her anchor. Forth shone the boar-shapes
 Over the check-guards golden adorned,

Beowulf

Fair-shifting, fire-hard; ward held the farrow.
Snorted the war-moody, hasten'd the warriors
And trod down together until the hall timber'd,
Stately and gold-bestain'd, gat they to look on,
That was the all-mightiest unto earth's dwellers
Of halls 'neath the heavens, wherein bode the mighty;
Glisten'd the gleam thereof o'er lands a many.

Unto them then the war-deer the court of the proud one
Full clearly betaught it, that they therewithal
Might wend their ways thither. Then he of the warriors
Round wended his steed, and spake a word backward:

"Time now for my faring; but the Father Allwielder
May He with all helping henceforward so hold you
All whole in your wayfaring. Will I to sea-side
Against the wroth folk to hold warding ever."

VI. BEOWULF AND THE GEATS COME INTO HART.

STONE-DIVERSE the street was, straight uplong the
path led

The warriors together. There shone the war-byrny
The hard and the hand-lock'd; the ring-iron sheer
Sang over their war-gear, when they to the hall first
In their gear the all-fearful had gat them to ganging.
So then the sea-weary their wide shields set down,
Their war-rounds the mighty, against the hall's wall.
Then bow'd they to bench, and rang there the byrnies,
The war-weed of warriors, and up-stood the spears,
The war-gear of the sea-folk all gather'd together,
The ash-holt grey-headed; that host of the iron
With weapons was worshipful. There then a proud chief
Of those lads of the battle spear'd after their line:

"Whence ferry ye then the shields golden-faced,
The grey sarks therewith, and the helms all bevisor'd,
And a heap of the war-shafts? Now am I of Hrothgar
The man and the messenger: ne'er saw I of aliens

So many of men more might-like of mood,
I ween that for pride-sake, no wise for wrack-wending
But for high might of mind, ye to Hrothgar have sought."

Beowulf

Unto him then the heart-hardy answer'd and spake,
The proud earl of the Weders the word gave aback,
The hardy neath helm:

"Now of Hygelac are we
The board-fellows; Beowulf e'en is my name,
And word will I say unto Healfdene's son,
To the mighty, the folk-lord, what errand is mine,
Yea unto thy lord, if to us he will grant it
That him, who so good is, anon we may greet."

Spake Wulfgar the word, a lord of the Wendels,
And the mood of his heart of a many was kenned,
His war and his wisdom:

"I therefore the Danes' friend
Will likely be asking of the lord of the Scyldings,
The dealer of rings, since the boon thou art bidding,
The mighty folk-lord, concerning thine errand,
And swiftly the answer shall do thee to wit
Which the good one to give thee aback may deem meetest."

Then turn'd he in haste to where Hrothgar was sitting
Right old and all hoary mid the host of his earl-folk:
Went the valour-stark; stood he the shoulders before
Of the Dane-lord: well could he the doughty ones' custom.
So Wulfgar spake forth to his lord the well-friendly:

Wulfgar telleth
Hrothgar of
the Geats

"Hither are ferry'd now, come from afar off
O'er the field of the ocean, a folk of the Geats;
These men of the battle e'en Beowulf name they
Their elder and chiefest, and to thee are they bidding
That they, O dear lord, with thee may be dealing
In word against word. Now win them no naysay
Of thy speech again-given, O Hrothgar the glad-man:
For they in their war-gear, methinketh, be worthy
Of good deeming of earls; and forsooth naught but doughty
Is he who hath led o'er the warriors hither."

VII. BEOWULF SPEAKETH WITH HROTHGAR,
AND TELLETH HOW HE WILL MEET GREN-
DEL.

WORD then gave out Hrothgar, the helm of the
Scyldings:
"I knew him in sooth when he was but a youngling,
And his father, the old man, was Ecgtheow hight;
Unto whom at his home gave Hrethel the Geat-lord
His one only daughter; and now hath his offspring
All hardy come hither a lief lord to seek him.
For that word they spake then, the sea-faring men,
E'en they who the gift-scat for the Geat-folk had ferry'd,
Brought thither for thanks, that of thirty of men-folk
The craft of might hath he within his own handgrip,
That war-strong of men. Now him holy God
For kind help hath sent off here even to us,
We men of the West Danes, as now I have weening,
'Gainst the terror of Grendel. So I to that good one
For his mighty mood-daring shall the dear treasure bid.
Haste now and be speedy, and bid them in straightway,
The kindred-band gather'd together, to see us,
And in words say thou eke that they be well comen
To the folk of the Danes."

To the door of the hall then
Went Wulfgar, and words withinward he flitted:

"He bade me to say you, my lord of fair battle,
The Ealdor of East-Danss, that he your blood knoweth,
And that unto him are ye, the sea-surges over,
Ye lads hardy-hearted, well come to land hither;
And now may ye wend you all in war-raiment
Under the battle-mask Hrothgar to see.
But here let your battle-boards yet be abiding,
With your war-weed and slaughter-shafts, issue of words."

Then rose up the rich one, much warriors around him,
Chosen heap of the thanes, but there some abided
The war-gear to hold, as the wight one was bidding.

Swift went they together, as the warrior there led them,
 Under Hart's roof: went the stout-hearted,
 The hardy neath helm, till he stood by the high-seat.
 Then Beowulf spake out, on him shone the byrny,
 His war-net besown by the wiles of the smith:
 "Hail to thee, Hrothgar! I am of Hygelac
 Kinsman and folk-thane; fair deeds have I many
 Begun in my youth-tide, and this matter of Grendel
 On the turf of mine own land undarkly I knew.
 'Tis the seafarers' say that standeth this hall,
 The best house forsooth, for each one of warriors
 All idle and useless, after the even-light
 Under the heaven-loft hidden becometh.
 Then lightly they learn'd me, my people, this lore,
 E'en the best that there be of the wise of the churls,
 O Hrothgar the kingly, that thee should I seek to,
 Whereas of the might of my craft were they cunning;
 For they saw me when came I from out of my wargear,
 Blood-stain'd from the foe whenas five had I bounden,
 Quell'd the kin of the eotens, and in the wave slain
 The nicors by night-tide; strait need then I bore,
 Wreak'd the grief of the Weders, the woe they had gotten;
 I ground down the wrathful; and now against Grendel
 I here with the dread one alone shall be dooming,
 In Thing with the giant. I now then with thee,
 O lord of the bright Danes, will fall to my bidding,
 O berg of Scyldings, and bid thee one boon,
 Which, O refuge of warriors, gainsay me not now,
 Since, O free friend of folks, from afar have I come,
 That I alone, I and my band of the earls,
 This hard heap of men, may cleanse Hart of ill.
 This eke have I heard say, that he, the fell monster,
 In his wan-heed recks nothing of weapons of war;
 Forgo I this therefore (if so be that Hygelac
 Will still be my man-lord, and he blithe of mood)
 To bear the sword with me, or bear the broad shield,
 Yellow-round to the battle; but with naught save the hand-grip

Beowulf

Beowulf
 speaketh
 with
 Hrothgar

Beowulf
 speaketh
 to an end

Beowulf

With the foe shall I grapple, and grope for the life
The loathly with loathly. There he shall believe
In the doom of the Lord whom death then shall take.
Now ween I that he, if he may wield matters,
E'en there in the war-hall the folk of the Geats
Shall eat up unafear'd, as oft he hath done it
With the might of the Hrethmen: no need for thee therefore
My head to be hiding; for me will he have
With gore all bestain'd, if the death of men get me;
He will bear off my bloody corpse minded to taste it;
Unmournfully then will the Lone-goer eat it,
Will blood-mark the moor-ways; for the meat of my body
Naught needest thou henceforth in any wise grieve thee.
But send thou to Hygelac, if the war have me,
The best of all war-shrouds that now my breast wardeth,
The goodliest of railings, the good gift of Hrethel,
The hand-work of Weland. Weird wends as she willeth."

VIII. HROTHGAR ANSWERETH BEOWULF AND BIDDETH HIM SIT TO THE FEAST.

SPAKE out then Hrothgar the helm of the Scyldings:
"Thou Beowulf, friend mine, for battle that wardeth
And for help that is kindly hast sought to us hither.
Fought down thy father the most of all feuds;
To Heatholaf was he forsooth for a hand-bane
Amidst of the Wylfings. The folk of the Weders
Him for the war-dread that while might not hold.
So thence did he seek to the folk of the South-Danes
O'er the waves' wallow, to the Scyldings beworshipp'd.
Then first was I wielding the weal of the Dane-folk,
That time was I holding in youth-tide the gem-rich
Hoard-burg of the heroes. Dead then was Heorogar,
Mine elder of brethren; unliving was he,
The Healfdene's bairn that was better than I.
That feud then thereafter with fee did I settle;
I sent to the Wylfing folk over the waters' back

Beowulf

Treasures of old time; he swore the oaths to me.
Sorrow is in my mind that needs must I say it
To any of grooms, of Grendel what hath he
Of shaming in Hart, and he with his hate-wiles
Of sudden harms framed; the host of my hall-floor,
The war-heap, is waned; Weird swept them away
Into horror of Grendel. It is God now that may lightly
The scather, the doltish from deeds thrust aside.
Full oft have they boasted with beer well bedrunken,
My men of the battle, all over the ale-stoup,
That they in the beer-hall would yet be abiding
The onset of Grendel with the terror of edges.
But then was this mead-hall in the tide of the morning,
This warrior-hall, gore-stain'd when day at last gleamed,
All the boards of the benches with blood besteam'd over,
The hall laid with sword-gore: of lieges less had I
Of dear and of doughty, for them death had gotten.
Now sit thou to feast and unbind thy mood freely,
Thy war-fame unto men as the mind of thee whetteth.”
Then was for the Geat-folk and them all together
There in the beer-hall a bench bedight roomsome,
There the stout-hearted hied them to sitting
Proud in their might: athane minded the service,
Who in hand upbare an ale-stoup adorned,
Skinked the sheer mead; whiles sang the shaper
Clear out in Hart-hall; joy was of warriors,
Men doughty no little of Danes and of Weders.

IX. UNFERTH CONTENDETH IN WORDS
WITH BEOWULF.

SPAKE out then Unferth that bairn was of Ecglaf,
And he sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldings,
He unbound the battle-rune; was Beowulf's faring,
Of him the proud mere-farer, mickle unliking,
Whereas he begrudg'd it of any man other
That he glories more mighty the middle-garth over
Should hold under heaven than he himself held:

Of the
swimming

"Art thou that Beowulf who won strife with Breca
On the wide sea contending in swimming,
When ye two for pride's sake search'd out the floods
And for a dolt's cry into deep water
Thrust both your life-days? No man the twain of you,
Lief or loth were he, might lay wyte to stay you
Your sorrowful journey, when on the sea row'd ye;
Then when the ocean-stream ye with your arms deck'd,
Meted the mere-streets, there your hands brandish'd!
O'er the Spearman ye glided; the sea with waves welter'd,
The surge of the winter. Ye twain in the waves' might
For a seven nights swink'd. He outdid thee in swimming,
And the more was his might; but him in the morn-tide
To the Heatho-Remes' land the holm bore ashore,
And thence away sought he to his dear land and lovely,
The lief to his people sought the land of the Brondings,
The fair burg peace-warding, where he the folk owned,
The burg and the gold rings. What to theeward he boasted,
Beanstan's son, for thee soothly he brought it about.
Now ween I for thee things worser than erewhile,
Though thou in the war-race wert everywhere doughty,
In the grim war, if thou herein Grendel darest
Night-long for a while of time nigh to abide."

Then Beowulf spake out, the Ecgtheow's bairn:
"What! thou no few of things, O Unferth my friend,
And thou drunken with beer, about Breca hast spoken,
Saidest out of his journey; so the sooth now I tell:

To wit, that the more might ever I owned,
Hard wearing on wave more than any man else.
We twain then, we quoth it, while yet we were younglings,
And we boasted between us, the twain of us being yet
In our youth-days, that we out onto the Spearman
Our lives would adventure; and e'en so we wrought it.
We had a sword naked, when on the sound row'd we,
Hard in hand, as we twain against the whale-fishes
Had mind to be warding us. No whit from me
In the waves of the sea-flood afar might he float
The hastier in holm, nor would I from him hie me.
Then we two together, we were in the sea
For a five nights, till us twain the flood drave asunder,
The weltering of waves. Then the coldest of weathers
In the dusking of night, and the wind from the northward
Battle-grim turn'd against us, rough grown were the billows.
Of the mere-fishes then was the mood all up-stirred;
There me 'gainst the loathly the body-sark mine,
The hard and the hand-lock'd, was framing me help,
My battle-rail braided, it lay on my breast
Gear'd graithly with gold. But me to the ground tugg'd
A foe and fiend-scather; fast he had me in hold
That grim one in grip: yet to me was it given,
That the wretch there, the monster, with point might I reach,
With my bill of the battle, and the war-race off bore
The mighty mere-beast through the hand that was mine.

X. BEOWULF MAKES AN END OF HIS TALE
OF THE SWIMMING. WEALHTHEOW,
HROTHGAR'S QUEEN, GREET'S HIM; AND
HROTHGAR DELIVERS TO HIM THE
WARDING OF THE HALL.

Of the
coming
ashore

THUS oft and oft over the doers of evil
They threaten'd me hard; thane-service I did them
With the dear sword of mine, as forsooth it was meet,
That nowise of their fill did they win them the joy,
The evil fordoers, in swallowing me down,
Sitting round at the feast nigh the ground of the sea.
Yea rather, a morning-tide, mangled by sword-edge
Along the waves' leaving up there did they lie
Lull'd asleep with the sword, so that never sithence
About the deep floods for the farers o'er ocean
The way have they letted. Came the light from the eastward,
The bright beacon of God, and grew the seas calm,
So that the sea-nesses now might I look on,
The windy walls. Thuswise Weird oft will be saving
The earl that is unfey, when his valour availeth.
Whatever, it happ'd me that I with the sword slew
Nicors nine. Never heard I of fighting a night-tide
'Neath the vault of the heavens was harder than that,
Nor yet on the sea-streams of woefuller wight.
Whatever, forth won I with life from the foe's clutch
All of wayfaring weary. But me the sea upbore,
The flood downlong the tide with the weltering of waters,
All onto the Finnland. No whit of thee ever
Mid such strife of the battle-gear have I heard say,
Such terrors of bills. Nor never yet Breca
In the play of the battle, nor both you, nor either,
So dearly the deeds have framed forsooth
With the bright flashing swords; though of this naught I
boast me.
But thou of thy brethren the banesman becamest,
Yea thine head-kin forsooth, for which in hell shalt thou

Dree weird of damnation, though doughty thy wit be;
For unto thee say I forsooth, son of Ecglaf,
That so many deeds never Grendel had done,
That monster the loathly, against thine own lord,
The shaming in Hart-hall, if suchwise thy mind were,
And thy soul e'en as battle-fierce such as thou sayest.
But he, he hath fram'd it that the feud he may heed not,
The fearful edge-onset that is of thy folk,
Nor sore need be fearful of the Victory-Scyldings.
The need-pledges taketh he, no man he spareth
Of the folk of the Danes, driveth war as he lusteth,
Slayeth and feasteth unweening of strife
With them of the Spear-Danes. But I, I shall show it,
The Geats' wightness and might ere the time weareth old,
Shall bide him in war-tide. Then let him go who may go
High-hearted to mead, sithence when the morn-light
O'er the children of men of the second day hence,
The sun clad in heaven's air, shines from the southward."

Beowulf

Then merry of heart was the meter of treasures,
The hoary-man'd war-renown'd, help now he trow'd in;
The lord of the Bright-Danes on Beowulf hearken'd,
The folk-shepherd knew him, his fast-ready mind.
There was laughter of heroes, and high the din rang
And winsome the words were. Went Wealhtheow forth,
The Queen she of Hrothgar, of courtesies mindful,
The gold-array'd greeted the grooms in the hall,
The free and frank woman the beaker there wended,
And first to the East-Dane-folk's fatherland's warder,
And bade him be blithe at the drinking of beer,
To his people beloved, and lustily took he
The feast and the hall-cup, that victory-fam'd King.
Then round about went she, the Dame of the Helmings,
And to doughty and youngsome, each deal of the folk there,
Gave cups of the treasure, till now it betid
That to Beowulf duly the Queen the ring-dighted,
Of mind high uplifted, the mead-beaker bare.
Then she greeted the Geat-lord, and gave God the thank,

Of Wealh-
theow

Beowulf

Beowulf tells
out his mind
toward the
quelling of
Grendel

She, the wisefast in words, that the will had wax'd in her
In one man of the earls to have trusting and troth
For comfort from crimes. But the cup then he took,
The slaughter-fierce warrior, from Wealhtheow the Queen.
And then rim'd he the word, making ready for war,
And Beowulf spake forth, the Ecgtheow's bairn:

"E'en that in mind had I when up on holm strode I,
And in sea-boat sat down with a band of my men,
That for once and for all the will of your people
Would I set me to work, or on slaughter-field cringe
Fast in grip of the fiend; yea and now shall I frame
The valour of earl-folk, or else be abiding
The day of mine end, here down in the mead-hall."

To the wife those his words well liking they were,
The big word of the Geat; and the gold-adorn'd wended,
The frank and free Queen to sit by her lord.

And thereafter within the high hall was as erst
The proud word outspoken and bliss on the people,
Was the sound of the victory-folk, till on a sudden
The Healfdene's son would now be a-seeking
His rest of the even: wotted he for the Evil
Within the high hall was the Hild-play bedight,
Sithence that the sun-light no more should they see,
When night should be darkening, and down over all
The shapes of the shadow-helms should be a-striding
Wan under the welkin.

Uprose then all war-folk;
Then greeted the glad-minded one man the other,
Hrothgar to Beowulf, bidding him hail,
And the wine-hall to wield, and withal quoth the word:

"Never to any man erst have I given,
Since the hand and the shield's round aloft might I heave,
This high hall of the Dane-folk, save now unto thee.
Have now and hold the best of all houses,
Mind thee of fame, show the might of thy valour!
Wake the wroth one: no lack shall there be to thy willing
If that wight-work thou win and life therewithal."

XI. NOW IS BEOWULF LEFT IN THE HALL
ALONE WITH HIS MEN.

THEN wended him Hrothgar with the band of his warriors,
The high-ward of the Scyldings from out of the hall,
For then would the war-lord go seek unto Wealhtheow
The Queen for a bed-mate. The Glory of king-folk
Against Grendel had set, as men have heard say,
A hall-ward who held him a service apart
In the house of the Dane-lord, for eoten-ward held he.
Forsooth he, the Geat-lord, full gladly he trowed
In the might of his mood and the grace of the Maker.
Therewith he did off him his byrny of iron
And the helm from his head, and his dighted sword gave,
The best of all irons, to thethane that abode him,
And bade him to hold that harness of battle.
Bespake then the good one, a big word he gave out,
Beowulf the Geat, ere on the bed strode he:
“Nowise in war I deem me more lowly
In the works of the battle than Grendel, I ween;
So not with the sword shall I lull him to slumber,
Or take his life thuswise, though to me were it easy;
Of that good wise he wots not, to get the stroke on me,
To hew on my shield, for as stark as he shall be
In the works of the foeman. So we twain a night-tide
Shall forgo the sword, if he dare yet to seek
The war without weapons. Sithence the wise God,
The Lord that is holy, on which hand soever
The glory may doom as due to him seemeth.”

Bowed down then the war-deer, the cheek-bolster took
The face of the earl; and about him a many
Of sea-warriors bold to their hall-slumber bow'd them;
No one of them thought that thence away should he
Seek ever again to his home the beloved,
His folk, or his free burg where erst he was fed;
For of men had they learn'd that o'er mickle a many
In that wine-hall aforetime the fell death had gotten

The Geats
rest in the
hall

Of the folk of the Danes; but the Lord to them gave it,
To the folk of the Weders, the web of war-speeding,
Help fair and good comfort, e'en so that their foeman
Through the craft of one man all they overcame,
By the self-might of one. So is manifest truth
That God the Almighty the kindred of men
Hath wielded wide ever.

Now by wan night there came,
There strode in the shade-goer; slept there the shooters,
They who that horn-house should be a-holding,
All men but one man: to men was that known,
That them indeed might not, since will'd not the Maker,
The scather unceasing drag off 'neath the shadow;
But he ever watching in wrath 'gainst the wroth one
Mood-swollen abided the battle-mote ever.

XII. GRENDEL COMETH INTO HART: OF THE STRIFE BETWIXT HIM AND BEOWULF.

CAME then from the moor-land, all under the mist-bents,
Grendel a-going there, bearing God's anger.
The scather the ill one was minded of mankind
To have one in his toils from the high hall aloft.
'Neath the welkin he waded, to the place whence the wine-house,
The gold-hall of men, most yarely he wist
With gold-plates fair colour'd; nor was it the first time
That he unto Hrothgar's high home had betook him.
Never he in his life-days, either erst or thereafter,
Of warriors more hardy or hall-thanes had found.
Came then to the house the wight on his ways,
Of all joys bereft; and soon sprang the door open,
With fire-bands made fast, when with hand he had touch'd it;
Brake the bale-heedy, he with wrath bollen,
The mouth of the house there, and early thereafter
On the shiny-fleck'd floor thereof trod forth the fiend;
On went he then mood-wroth, and out from his eyes stood
Likest to fire-flame light full unfair.

In the high house beheld he a many of warriors,
 A host of men sib all sleeping together,
 Of man-warriors a heap; then laugh'd out his mood;
 In mind deem'd he to sunder, or ever came day,
 The monster, the fell one, from each of the men there
 The life from the body; for befell him a boding
 Of fulfilment of feeding: but Weird now it was not
 That he any more of mankind thenceforward
 Should eat, that night over. Huge evil beheld then
 The Hygelac's kinsman, and how the foul scather
 All with his fear-grips would fare there before him;
 How never the monster was minded to tarry,
 For speedily gat he, and at the first stour,
 A warrior a-sleeping, and unaware slit him,
 Bit his bone-coffer, drank blood a-streaming,
 Great gobbets swallow'd in; thenceforth soon had he
 Of the unliving one every whit eaten
 To hands and feet even: then forth strode he nigher,
 And took hold with his hand upon him the high-hearted,
 The warrior a-resting; reach'd out to himwards
 The fiend with his hand, gat fast on him rathely
 With thought of all evil, and besat him his arm.
 Then swiftly was finding the herdsman of foul deeds
 That forsooth he had met not in Middle-garth ever,
 In the parts of the earth, in any man else
 A hand-grip more mighty; then wax'd he of mood
 Heart-fearful, but none the more outward might he;
 Hence-eager his heart was to the darkness to hie him,
 And the devil-dray seek: not there was his service
 E'en such as he found in his life-days before.
 Then to heart laid the good one, the Hygelac's kinsman,
 His speech of the even-tide, uplong he stood
 And fast with him grappled, till bursted his fingers.
 The eoten was out-fain, but on strode the earl.
 The mighty fiend minded was, whereso he might,
 To wind him about more widely away thence,
 And flee fenwards; he found then the might of his fingers

Beowulf

Grendel
 devoureth
 a Geat

Beowulf

In the grip of the fierce one; sorry faring was that
Which he, the harm-scather, had taken to Hart.
The warrior-hall dinn'd now; unto all Danes there waxed,
To the castle-abiders, to each of the keen ones,
To all earls, as an ale-dearth. Now angry were both
Of the fierce mighty warriors, far rang out the hall-house;
Then mickle the wonder it was that the wine-hall
Withstood the two war-deer, nor welter'd to earth
The fair earthly dwelling; but all fast was it builded
Within and without with the banding of iron
By crafty thought smithy'd. But there from the sill bow'd
Full many a mead-bench, by hearsay of mine,
With gold well adorned, where strove they the wrothful.
Hereof never ween'd they, the wise of the Scyldings,
That ever with might should any of men
The excellent, bone-dight, break into pieces,
Or unlock with cunning, save the light fire's embracing
In smoke should it swallow. So uprose the roar
New and enough; now fell on the North-Danes
Ill fear and the terror, on each and on all men,
Of them who from wall-top hearken'd the weeping,
Even God's foeman singing the fear-lay,
The triumphless song, and the wound-bewailing
Of the thrall of the Hell; for there now fast held him
He who of men of main was the mightiest
In that day which is told of, the day of this life.

XIII. BEOWULF HATH THE VICTORY: GRENDEL IS HURT DEADLY AND LEAVETH HAND AND ARM IN THE HALL.

N AUGHT would the earls' help for anything thenceforth
That murder-comer yet quick let loose of,
Nor his life-days forsooth to any of folk
Told he for useful. Out then drew full many
Of Beowulf's earls the heir-loom of old days,
For their lord and their master's fair life would they ward,
That mighty of Princes, if so might they do it.
For this did they know not when they the strife dreed,
Those hardy-minded men of the battle,
And on every half there thought to be hewing,
And search out his soul, that the ceaseless scather
Not any on earth of the choice of all irons,
Not one of the war-bills, would greet home for ever,
For he had forsworn him from victory-weapons,
And each one of edges. But his sundering of soul
In the days that we tell of, the day of this life,
Should be weary and woeful, the ghost wending elsewhere
To the wielding of fiends to wend him afar.
Then found he out this, he who mickle erst made
Out of mirth of his mood unto children of men
And had fram'd many crimes, he the foeman of God,
That the body of him would not bide to avail him,
But the hardy of mood, even Hygelac's kinsman,
Had him fast by the hand: now was each to the other
All loathly while living: his body-sore bided
The monster: was manifest now on his shoulder
The unceasing wound, sprang the sinews asunder,
The bone-lockers bursted. To Beowulf now
Was the battle-fame given; should Grendel thenceforth
Flee life-sick awayward and under the fen-bents
Seek his unmerry stead: now wist he more surely
That ended his life was, and gone over for ever,
His day-tale told out. But was for all Dane-folk

Grendel
overcome

Beowulf

After that slaughter-race all their will done.
Then had he cleans'd for them, he the far-comer,
Wise and stout-hearted, the high hall of Hrothgar,
And sav'd it from war. So the night-work he joy'd in
And his doughty deed done. Yea, but he for the East-Danes
That lord of the Geat-folk his boast's end had gotten,
Withal their woes bygone all had he booted,
And the sorrow hate-fashion'd that afore they had dreed,
And the hard need and bitter that erst they must bear,
The sorrow unlittle. Sithence was clear token
When the deer of the battle laid down there the hand,
The arm and the shoulder, and all there together
Of the grip of that Grendel 'neath the great roof upbuild.

XIV. THE DANES REJOICE; THEY GO TO LOOK
ON THE SLOT OF GRENDEL, & COME BACK
TO HART, AND ON THE WAY MAKE MERRY
WITH RACING AND THE TELLING OF TALES.

THERE was then on the morning, as I have heard tell it,
Round the gift-hall a many of men of the warriors:
Were faring folk-leaders from far and from near
O'er the wide-away roads, the wonder to look on,
The track of the Loathly: his life-sundering nowise
Was deem'd for a sorrow to any of men there
Who gaz'd on the track of the gloryless wight;
How he all a-weary of mood thence awayward,
Brought to naught in the battle, to the mere of the nicors,
Now fey and forth-fleeing, his life-steps had flitted.
There all in the blood was the sea-brim a-welling,
The dread swing of the waves was washing all mingled
With hot blood; with the gore of the sword was it welling;
The death-doom'd had dyed it, sithence he unmerry
In his fen-hold had laid down the last of his life,
His soul of the heathen, and hell gat hold on him.

Thence back again far'd they those fellows of old,
With many a young one, from their wayfaring merry,

Full proud from the mere-side on mares there a-riding Beowulf
 The warriors on white steeds. There then was of Beowulf
 Set forth the might mighty; oft quoth it a many
 That nor northward nor southward beside the twin sea-floods,
 Over all the huge earth's face now never another,
 Never under the heaven's breadth, was there a better,
 Nor of wielders of war-shields a worthier of king-ship;
 But neither their friendly lord blam'd they one whit,
 Hrothgar the glad, for good of kings was he.
 There whiles the warriors far-famed let leap
 Their fair fallow horses and fare into flyting A warrior
 Where unto them the earth-ways for fair-fashion'd seemed, tells of
 Through their choiceness well kenned; and whiles a king's thane, Sigemund
 A warrior vaunt-laden, of lays grown bemindful,
 E'en he who all many of tales of the old days
 A multitude minded, found other words also
 Sooth-bounden, and boldly the man thus began
 E'en Beowulf's wayfare well wisely to stir,
 With good speed to set forth the spells well areded
 And to shift about words. And well of all told he
 That he of Sigemund erst had heard say,
 Of the deeds of his might; and many things uncouth:
 Of the strife of the Wælsing and his wide wayfarings,
 Of those that men's children not well yet they wist,
 The feud and the crimes, save Fitela with him;
 Somewhat of such things yet would he say,
 The eme to the nephew; e'en as they aye were
 In all strife soever fellows full needful;
 And full many had they of the kin of the eotens
 Laid low with the sword. And to Sigemund upsprang
 After his death-day fair doom unlittle
 Sithence that the war-hard the Worm there had quelled,
 The herd of the hoard; he under the hoar stone,
 The bairn of the Atheling, all alone dar'd it,
 That wight deed of deeds; with him Fitela was not.
 But howe'er, his hap was that the sword so through-waded
 The Worm the all-wondrous, that in the wall stood

A warrior
 tells of
 Sigemund

Wælsing, or
 Son of Wæls,
 i.e. Sigemund,
 who was father
 (and uncle) of
 Fitela by his
 sister Signy.
 This is told at
 length in the
 Icelandic
 Volsung Story:
 where Fitela is
 called Sinfjötli.

How Sigemund
 slew the Worm

<p>Beowulf In the Volsung Story it is Sigurd the son of Sigmund whoslays the Worm</p>	<p>The iron dear-wrought: and the drake died the murder. There had the warrior so won by wightness, That he of the ring-hoard the use might be having All at his own will. The sea-boat he loaded, And into the ship's barm bore the bright fretwork Wæls' son. In the hotness the Worm was to-molten. Now he of all wanderers was widely the greatest Through the peoples of man-kind, the warder of warriors, By mighty deeds; erst then and early he throve. Now sithence the warfare of Heremod waned, His might and his valour, amidst of the eotens To the wielding of foemen straight was he betrayed, And speedily sent forth: by the surges of sorrow O'er-long was he lam'd, became he to his lieges, To all of the athelings, a life-care thenceforward. Withal oft bemoaned in times that were older The ways of that stout heart many a carle of the wisest, Who trow'd in him boldly for booting of bales, And had look'd that the king's bairn should ever be thriving, His father's own lordship should take, hold the folk, The hoard and the ward-burg, and realm of the heroes, The own land of the Scyldings. To all men was Beowulf, The Hygelac's kinsman to the kindred of menfolk, More fair unto friends; but on Heremod crime fell.</p>
<p>Heremod is here and else- where put for- ward as an ex- ample of a bad chieftain. Of his story nothing is known outside of this book</p>	<p>So whiles the men flyting, the fallow street there With theirmareswere they meting. There then was the morn-light Thrust forth and hasten'd; went many a warrior All hardy of heart to the high hall aloft The rare wonder to see; and the King's self withal From the bride-bower wended, the warder of ring-hoards, All glorious he trod and a mickle troop had he, He for choice ways beknown; and his Queen therewithal Meted the mead-path with a meyny of maidens.</p>
<p>Hrothgar comes to Hart</p>	

XV. KING HROTHGAR AND HIS THANES LOOK
ON THE ARM OF GRENDEL. CONVERSE BE-
TWINX HROTHGAR AND BEOWULF CON-
CERNING THE BATTLE.

OUT then spake Hrothgar; for he to the hall went,
By the staple a-standing the steep roof he saw
Shining fair with the gold, and the hand there of Grendel:

"For this sight that I see to the All-wielder thanks
Befall now forthwith, for foul evil I bided,
All griefs from this Grendel; but God, glory's Herder,
Wonder on wonder ever can work.

Unyore was it then when I for myself
Might ween never more, wide all through my life-days,
Of the booting of woes; when all blood-besprinkled
The best of all houses stood sword-gory here;
Wide then had the woe thrust off each of the wise
Of them that were looking that never life-long
That land-work of the Folk they might ward from the loathly,
From ill wights and devils. But now hath a warrior
Through the might of the Lord a deed made thereunto
Which we, and all we together, in nowise
By wisdom might work. What! well might be saying
That maid whosoever this son brought to birth
According to man's kind, if yet she be living,
That the Maker of old time to her was all-gracious
In the bearing of bairns. O Beowulf, I now
Thee best of all men as a son unto me
Will love in my heart, and hold thou henceforward
Our kinship new-made now; nor to thee shall be lacking
As to longings of world-goods whereof I have wielding;
Full oft I for lesser things guerdon have given,
The worship of hoards, to a warrior was weaker,
A worser in strife. Now thyself for thyself
By deeds hast thou fram'd it that liveth thy fair fame
For ever and ever. So may the All-wielder
With good pay thee ever, as erst he hath done it."

Hrothgar
gives praise
to Beowulf

Beowulf

Then Beowulf spake out, the Ecgtheow's bairn:
"That work of much might with mickle of love
We framed with fighting, and frowardly ventur'd
The might of the Uncouth; now I would that rather
Thou mightest have look'd on the very man there,
The foe in his fret-gear all worn unto falling.
There him in all haste with hard griping did I
On the slaughter-bed deem it to bind him indeed,
That he for my hand-grip should have to be lying
All busy for life: but his body fled off.
Him then I might not (since would not the Maker)
From his wayfaring sunder, nor naught so well sought I
The life-foe; o'er-mickle of might was he yet,
The foeman afoot: but his hand has he left us,
A life-ward, a-warding the ways of his wending,
His arm and his shoulder therewith. Yet in nowise
That wretch of the grooms any solace hath got him,
Nor longer will live the loathly deed-doer,
Beswinked with sins; for the sore hath him now
In the grip of need grievous, in strait hold to-gather'd
With bonds that be baleful: there shall he abide,
That wight dyed with all evil-deeds, the doom mickle,
For what wise to him the bright Maker will write it."

Of Grendel's
hand

Then a silenter man was the son there of Ecglaf
In the speech of the boasting of works of the battle,
After when every atheling by craft of the earl
Over the high roof had look'd on the hand there,
Yea, the fiend's fingers before his own eyen,
Each one of the nail-steads most like unto steel,
Hand-spur of the heathen one; yea, the own claw
Uncouth of the War-wight. But each one there quoth it,
That no iron of the best, of the hardy of folk,
Would touch him at all, which e'er of the monster
The battle-hand bloody might bear away thence.

XVI. HROTHGAR GIVETH GIFTS TO BEOWULF.

THEN was speedily bidden that Hart be withinward
By hand of man well adorn'd; was there a many
Of warriors and wives, who straightway that wine-house,
The guest-house, bedight them: there gold-shotten shone
The webs over the walls, many wonders to look on
For men every one who on such things will stare.

They feast in
Hart again

Was that building the bright all broken about
All withinward, though fast in the bands of the iron;
Asunder the hinges rent, only the roof there
Was saved all sound, when the monster of evil,
The guilty of crime-deeds had gat him to flight
Never hoping for life.

Nay, lightly now may not
That matter be fled from, frame it whoso may frame it.
But by strife man shall win of the bearers of souls,
Of the children of men, compelled by need,
The abiders on earth, the place made all ready,
The stead where his body laid fast on his death-bed
Shall sleep after feast.

Now time and place was it
When unto the hall went that Healfdene's son,
And the King himself therein the feast should be sharing;
Never heard I of men-folk in fellowship more
About their wealth-giver so well themselves bearing.
Then bow'd unto bench there the abounders in riches
And were fain of their fill. Full fairly there took
A many of mead-cups the kin of those men,
The sturdy of heart in the hall high aloft,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Hart there withinward
Of friends was fulfilled; naught there that was guileful
The folk of the Scyldings for yet awhile framed.

Gave then to Beowulf Healfdene's bairn
A golden war-ensign, the victory's guerdon,
A staff-banner fair-dight, a helm and a byrny:
The great jewel-sword a many men saw them

Beowulf Gifts given to Beowulf	Bear forth to the hero. Then Beowulf took The cup on the floor, and nowise of that fee-gift Before the shaft-shooters the shame need he have. Never heard I how friendlier four of the treasures, All gear'd with the gold about, many men erewhile On the ale-bench have given to others of men. Round the roof of the helm, the burg of the head, A wale wound with wires held ward from withoutward, So that the file-leavings might not over fiercely, Were they never so shower-hard, scathe the shield-bold, When he 'gainst the angry in anger should get him. Therewith bade the earls'-burg that eight of the horses With cheek-plates adorned be led down the floor In under the fences; on one thereof stood A saddle all craft-bedeck'd, seemly with treasure. That same was the war-seat of the high King full surely Whenas that the sword-play that Healfdene's son Would work; never failed in front of the war The wide-kenn'd one's war-might, whereas fell the slain. So to Beowulf thereon of either of both The Ingwines' high warder gave wielding to have, Both the war-steeds and weapons, and bade him well brook them. Thuswise and so manly the mighty of princes, Hoard-warden of heroes, the battle-race paid With mares and with gems, so as no man shall blame them, E'en he who will say sooth aright as it is.
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XVII. THEY FEAST IN HART. THE GLEEMAN
SINGS OF FINN AND HENGEST.

THEN the lord of the earl-folk to every and each one
Of them who with Beowulf the sea-ways had worn
Then and there on the mead-bench did handsel them treasure,
An heir-loom to wit; for him also he bade it
That a were-gild be paid, whom Grendel aforetime
By wickedness quell'd, as far more of them would he,
Save from them God all-witting the Weird away wended,
And that man's mood withal. But the Maker all wielded
Of the kindred of mankind, as yet now he doeth.
Therefore through-witting will be the best everywhere
And the forethought of mind. Many things must abide
Of lief and of loth, he who here a long while
In these days of the strife with the world shall be dealing.

There song was and sound all gather'd together
Of that Healfdene's warrior and wielder of battle,
The wood of glee greeted, the lay wreaked often,
Whenas the hall-game the minstrel of Hrothgar
All down by the mead-bench tale must be making:

“By Finn's sons aforetime, when the fear gat them,
The hero of Half-Danes, Hnæf of the Scyldings,
On the slaughter-field Frisian needs must he fall.
Forsooth never Hildeburh needed to hery
The troth of the Eotens; she all unsinning
Was lorne of her lief ones in that play of the linden,
Her bairns and her brethren, by fate there they fell
Spear-wounded. That was the all-woeful of women.
Not unduly without cause the daughter of Hoc
Mourn'd the Maker's own shaping, sithence came the morn
When she under the heavens that tide came to see
Murder-bale of her kinsmen, where most had she erewhile
Of world's bliss. The war-tide took all men away
Of Finn's thanes that were, save only a few;

Peace made
between Finn
and Hengest

Beowulf

Of this matter
of Finn and
Hengest see the
note at end of
the book

E'en so that he might not on the field of the meeting
Hold Hengest a war-tide, or fight any whit,
Nor yet snatch away thence by war the woe-leavings
From the thane of the King; but terms now they bade him
That for them other stead all for all should make room,
A hall and high settle, whereof the half-wielding
They with the Eotens' bairns henceforth might hold,
And with fee-gifts moreover the son of Folkwalda
Each day of the days the Danes should beworthy;
The war-heap of Hengest with rings should he honour
Even so greatly with treasure of treasures,
Of gold all beplated, as he the kin Frisian
Down in the beer-hall duly should dight.
Troth then they struck there each of the two halves,
A peace-troth full fast. There Finn unto Hengest
Strongly, unstrifeful, with oath-swearing swore,
That he the woe-leaving by the doom of the wise ones
Should hold in all honour, that never man henceforth
With word or with work the troth should be breaking,
Nor through craft of the guileful should undo it ever,
Though their ring-giver's bane they must follow in rank
All lordless, e'en so need is it to be:
But if any of Frisians by over-bold speaking
The murderful hatred should call unto mind,
Then naught but the edge of the sword should avenge it.
Then done was the oath there, and gold of the golden
Heav'd up from the hoard. Of the bold Here-Scyldings
All yare on the bale was the best battle-warrior;
On the death-howe beholden was easily there
The sark stain'd with war-sweat, the all-golden swine,
The iron-hard boar; there was many an atheling
With wounds all outworn; some on slaughter-field welter'd.
But Hildeburh therewith on Hnæf's bale she bade them
The own son of herself to set fast in the flame,
His bone-vats to burn up and lay on the bale there:
On his shoulder all woeful the woman lamented,
Sang songs of bewailing, as the warrior strode upward,

Wound up to the welkin that most of death-fires,
 Before the howe howled; there molten the heads were,
 The wound-gates burst open, there blood was out-springing
 From foe-bites of the body; the flame swallow'd all,
 The greediest of ghosts, of them that war gat him
 Of either of folks; shaken off was their life-breath.

Beowulf

XVIII. THE ENDING OF THE TALE OF FINN.

DEPARTED the warriors their wicks to visit
 All forlorn of their friends now, Friesland to look on,
 Their homes and their high burg. Hengest a while yet
 Through the slaughter-dyed winter bode dwelling with Finn
 And all without strife: he remember'd his homeland,
 Though never he might o'er the mere be a-driving
 The high prow be-ringed: with storm the holm welter'd,
 Won war 'gainst the winds; winter locked the waves
 With bondage of ice, till again came another
 Of years into the garth, as yet it is ever,
 And the days which the season to watch never cease,
 The glory-bright weather; then gone was the winter,
 And fair was the earth's barm. Now hasten'd the exile,
 The guest from the garths; he on getting of vengeance
 Of harms thought more greatly than of the sea's highway,
 If he but a wrath-mote might yet be a-wending
 Where the bairns of the Eotens might he still remember.
 The ways of the world forwent he in nowise
 Then, whenas Hunlafing the light of the battle,
 The best of all bills, did into his breast,
 Whereof mid the Eotens were the edges well known.

The son of
 Hunlaf slays
 Hengest

“Withal to the bold-hearted Finn befell after
 Sword-bales the deadly at his very own dwelling,
 When the grim grip of war Guthlaf and Oslaf
 After the sea-fare lamented with sorrow
 And wyted him deal of their woes; nor then might he
 In his breast hold his wavering heart. Was the hall dight
 With the lives of slain foemen, and slain eke was Finn

The slaying
 of Finn

Beowulf The King midst of his court-men; and there the Queen, taken,
The shooters of the Scyldings ferry'd down to the sea-ships,
And the house-wares and chattels the earth-king had had,
E'en such as at Finn's home there might they find,
Of collars and cunning gems. They on the sea-path
The all-lordly wife to the Danes straightly wended,
Led her home to their people."

Here ends the
Lay of Finn

Wealtheow bids
Hrothgar
honour Beo-
wulf

So sung was the lay,
The song of the gleeman; then again arose game,
The bench-voice wax'd brighter, gave forth the birlers
Wine of the wonder-vats. Then came forth Wealhtheow
Under gold ring a-going to where sat the two good ones,
The uncle and nephew, yet of kindred unsunder'd,
Each true to the other. Eke Unferth the spokesman
Sat at feet of the Scyldings' lord; each of his heart trow'd
That of mickle mood was he, though he to his kinsmen
Were un-upright in edge-play.

Spake the dame of the Scyldings:
"Now take thou this cup, my lord of the kingly,
Bestower of treasures! Be thou in thy joyance,
Thou gold-friend of men! and speak to these Geat-folk
In mild words, as duly behoveth to do;
Be glad toward the Geat-folk, and mindful of gifts;
From anigh and from far peace hast thou as now.
To me one hath said it, that thou for a son wouldst
This warrior be holding. Lo! Hart now is cleansed,
The ring-hall bright-beaming. Have joy while thou mayest
In many a meed, and unto thy kinsmen
Leave folk and dominion, when forth thou must fare
To look on the Maker's own making. I know now
My Hrothulf the gladsome, that he this young man
Will hold in all honour if thou now before him,
O friend of the Scyldings, shall fare from the world;
I ween that good-will yet this man will be yielding
To our offspring that after us be, if he mind him
Of all that which we two, for good-will and for worship,
Unto him erst a child yet have framed of kindness."

Then along by the bench did she turn, where her boys were, Beowulf
Hrethric and Hrothmund, and the bairns of high warriors,
The young ones together; and there sat the good one,
Beowulf the Geat, betwixt the two brethren.

XIX. MORE GIFTS ARE GIVEN TO BEOWULF.
THE BRISING COLLAR TOLD OF.

BORNE to him then the cup was, and therewith friendly bidding
In words was put forth; and gold about wounden
All blithely they bade him bear; arm-gearings twain,
Rail and rings, the most greatest of fashion of neck-rings
Of them that on earth I have ever heard tell of:
Not one under heaven wrought better was heard of
Midst the hoard-gems of heroes, since bore away Hama
To the bright burg and brave the neck-gear of the Brisings,
The gem and the gem-chest: from the foeman's guile fled he
Of Eormenric then, and chose rede everlasting.
That ring Hygelac had, e'en he of the Geat-folk,
The grandson of Swerting, the last time of all times
When he under the war-sign his treasure defended,
The slaughter-prey warded. Him Weird bore away
Sithence he for pride-sake the war-woe abided,
The feud with the Frisians; the fretwork he flitted,
The gem-stones much worthy, all over the waves' cup.
The King the full mighty cring'd under the shield;
Into grasp of the Franks the King's life was gotten
With the gear of the breast and the ring altogether;
It was worse war-wolves then reft gear from the slain
After the war-shearing; there the Geats' war-folk
Held the house of the dead men.

The Hall took the voices;
Spake out then Wealhtheow; before the host said she:
"Brook thou this roundel, lief Beowulf, henceforth,
Dear youth, with all hail, and this rail be thou using,
These gems of folk-treasures, and thrive thou well ever;
Thy might then make manifest! Be to these lads here

Beowulf Kind of lore, and for that will I look to thy guerdon.
 Thou hast won by thy faring, that far and near henceforth,
 Through wide time to come, men will give thee the worship,
 As widely as ever the sea winds about
 The windy land-walls. Be the while thou art living
 An atheling wealthy, and well do I will thee
 Of good of the treasures; be thou to my son
 In deed ever friendly, and uphold thy joyance!
 Lo! each of the earls here to the other is trusty,
 And mild of his mood and to man-lord full faithful,
 Kind friends all the thanes are, the folk ever yare.
 Ye well drunk of folk-grooms, now do ye my biddings.”
 To her settle then far'd she; was the feast of the choicest,
 The men drank the wine nothing wotting of Weird,
 The grim shaping of old, e'en as forth it had gone
 To a many of earls; sithence came the even,
 Hrothgar goes And Hrothgar departed to his chamber on high,
 bedward The rich to his rest; and aright the house warded
 Earls untold of number, as oft did they erewhile.
 The bench-boards they bar'd them, and there they spread over
 With beds and with bolsters. Of the beer-skinkers one
 Who fain was and fey, bow'd adown to his floor-rest.
 At their heads then they rested their rounds of the battle,
 Their board-woods bright-shining. There on the bench was,
 Over the Atheling, easy to look on,
 The battle-steep war-helm, the byrny be-ringed,
 The wood of the onset, all-glorious. Their wont was
 That oft and oft were they all yare for the war-tide,
 Both at home and in hosting, were it one, were it either,
 And for every such tide as their liege lord unto
 The need were befallen: right good was that folk.

XX. GRENDEL'S DAM BREAKS INTO HART
AND BEARS OFF AESCHERE.

S O sank they to slumber; but one paid full sorely
For his rest of the even, as to them fell full often
Sithence that the gold-hall Grendel had guarded, Grendel's dam
And won deed of unright, until that the end came
And death after sinning: but clear was it shown now,
Wide wotted of men, that e'en yet was a wreaker
Living after the loathly, a long while of time
After the battle-care, Grendel's own mother;
The woman, the monster-wife, minded her woe,
She who needs must in horror of waters be wonning,
The streams all a-cold, sithence Cain was become
For an edge-bane forsooth to his very own brother,
The own son of his father. Forth bann'd then he fared,
All marked by murder, from man's joy to flee,
And dwelt in the waste-land. Thence woke there a many
Ghosts shapen of old time, of whom one was Grendel,
The fierce wolf, the hateful, who found him at Hart
A man there a-watching, abiding the war-tide;
Where to him the fell ogre to hand-grips befell;
Howe'er he him minded of the strength of his might,
The great gift set fast in him given of God,
And trowed in grace by the All-wielder given,
His fostering, his staying; so the fiend he o'ercame
And bow'd down the Hell's ghost, that all humble he wended
Fordone of all mirth Death's house to go look on,
That fiend of all mankind.

But yet was his mother,
The greedy, the glum-moody, fain to be going
A sorrowful journey her son's death to wreak.

So came she to Hart whereas now the Ring-Danes
Were sleeping adown the hall; soon there befell
Change of days to the earl-folk, when in she came thrusting,
Grendel's mother: and soothly was minish'd the terror
By even so much as the craft-work of maidens,

The slaying
of Aeschere

Beowulf

The war-terror of wife, is beside the man weapon'd,
When the sword all hard bounden, by hammers to-beaten,
The sword all sweat-stain'd, through the swine o'er the war-helm
With edges full doughty down rightly sheareth.

But therewith in the hall was tugg'd out the hard edge,
The sword o'er the settles, and wide shields a many
Heaved fast in the hand: no one the helm heeded,
Nor the byrny wide-wrought, when the wild fear fell on them.
In haste was she then, and out would she thenceforth
For the saving her life, whenas she should be found there.
But one of the Athelings she speedily handled
And caught up full fast, and fenward so fared.
But he was unto Hrothgar the liefest of heroes
Of the sort of the fellows; betwixt the two sea-floods
A mighty shield-warrior, whom she at rest brake up,
A war-wight well famed.

Beowulf asks
Hrothgar of
the night

There Beowulf was not;
Another house soothly had erewhile been dighted
After gift of that treasure to that great one of Geats.

Uprose cry then in Hart, all 'mid gore had she taken
The Hand, the well-known, and now care wrought anew
In the wicks was arisen. Naught well was the bargain
That on both halves they needs must be buying that tide
With the life-days of friends.

Then the lord king, the wise,
The hoary of war-folk, was harmed of mood
When his elder of thanes and he now unliving,
The dearest of all, he knew to be dead.

To the bower full swiftly was Beowulf brought now,
The man victory-dower'd; together with day-dawn
Went he, one of the earls, that champion beworthy'd,
Himself with his fellows, where the wise was abiding
To wot if the All-wielder ever will to him
After the tale of woe happy change work.

Then went down the floor he the war-worthy
With the host of his hand, while high dinn'd the hall-wood,
Till he there the wise one with words had well greeted,

The lord of the Ingwines, and ask'd had the night been,
Since sore he was summon'd, a night of sweet easement.

Beowulf

XXI. HROTHGAR LAMENTS THE SLAYING
OF AESCHERE, AND TELLS OF GRENDEL'S
MOTHER AND HER DEN.

SPAKE out then Hrothgar the helm of the Scyldings:
"Ask no more after bliss; for new-made now is sorrow
For the folk of the Danes; for Aeschere is dead,

He who was Yrmenlaf's elder of brethren,
My wise man of runes, my bearer of redes,
Mine own shoulder-fellow, when we in the war-tide
Warded our heads and the host on the host fell,
And the boars were a-crashing; e'en such should an earl be,
An atheling exceeding good, e'en as was Aeschere.
Now in Hart hath befallen for a hand-bane unto him
A slaughter-ghost wandering; naught wot I whither
The fell one, the carrion-proud, far'd hath her back-fare,
By her fill made all famous. That feud hath she wreaked
Wherein yesternight gone by Grendel thou quelledst
Through thy hardihood fierce with grips hard enow,
For that he over-long the lief people of me
Made to wane and undid. In the war then he cringed,
Being forfeit of life. But now came another,
An ill-scather mighty, her son to awreak;
And further hath she now the feud set on foot,
As may well be deemed of many athane,
Who after the wealth-giver weepeth in mind,
A hard bale of heart. Now the hand lieth low
Which well-nigh for every joy once did avail you.

Hrothgar tells
of Grendel's
dam

"The dwellers in land here, my people indeed,
The wise-of-rede hall-folk, have I heard say e'en this:
That they have set eyes on two such-like erewhile,
Two mickle mark-striders the moorland a-holding,
Ghosts come from elsewhere, but of them one there was,
As full certainly might they then know it to be,

Beowulf

In the likeness of woman; and the other shap'd loathly
All after man's image trod the tracks of the exile,
Save that more was he shapen than any man other;
And in days gone away now they named him Grendel,
The dwellers in fold; they wot not if a father
Unto him was born ever in the days of erewhile
Of dark ghosts.

Of the abode
of those twain

“They dwell in a dim hidden land,
The wolf-bents they bide in, on the nesses the windy,
The perilous fen-paths where the stream of the fell-side
Midst the mists of the nesses wends netherward ever,
The flood under earth. Naught far away hence,
But a mile-mark forsooth, there standeth the mere,
And over it ever hang groves all berimed,
The wood fast by the roots over-helmeth the water.
But each night may one a dread wonder there see,
A fire in the flood. But none liveth so wise
Of the bairns of mankind, that the bottom may know.
Although the heath-stepper beswinked by hounds,
The hart strong of horns, that holt-wood should seek to,
Driven fleeing from far, he shall sooner leave life,
Leave life-breath on the bank, or ever will he
Therein hide his head. No hallow'd stead is it:
Thence the blending of water-waves ever upriseth
Wan up to the welkin, whenso the wind stirreth
Weather-storms loathly, until the lift darkens
And weepeth the heavens.

“Now along the rede wendeth
Of thee again only. Of that earth yet thou know'st not,
The fearful of steads, wherein thou mayst find
That much-sinning wight; seek then if thou dare,
And thee for that feud will I guerdon with fee,
The treasures of old time, as erst did I do,
With the gold all-bewounden, if away thence thou get thee.”

XXII. THEY FOLLOW GRENDEL'S DAM TO HER LAIR.

SPAKE out then Beowulf the Ecgtheow's bairn :
"O wise of men, mourn not; for to each man 'tis better
That his friend he awreak than weep overmuch.

Lo! each of us soothly abideth the ending
Of the life of the world. Then let him work who work may
High deeds ere the death: to the doughty of war-lads
When he is unliving shall it best be hereafter.

They follow
herslot

Rise up, warder of kingdom! and swiftly now wend we
The Grendel kinswoman's late goings to look on;
And this I behote thee, that to holm shall she flee not,
Nor into earth's fathom, nor into the fell-holt,
Nor the grounds of the ocean, go whereas she will go.
For this one of days patience dree thou a while then
Of each one of thy woes, as I ween it of thee."

Then leapt up the old man, and lightly gave God thank,
That mighty of Lords, for the word which the man spake.
And for Hrothgar straightway then was bitted a horse,
A wave-maned steed: and the wise of the princes
Went stately his ways; and stepp'd out the man-troop,
The linden-board bearers. Now lightly the tracks were
All through the woodland ways wide to be seen there,
Her goings o'er ground; she had gotten her forthright
Over the mirk-moor: bore she of kindred thanes
The best that there was, all bare of his soul,
Of them that with Hrothgar heeded the home.
Overwent then that bairn of the Athelings
Steep bents of the stones, and stridings full narrow,
Strait paths nothing pass'd over, ways all uncouth,
Sheer nesses to wit, many houses of nicors.

He one of the few was going before,
Of the wise of the men, the meadow to look on,
Until suddenly there the trees of the mountains
Over the hoar-stone found he a-leaning,
A wood without gladness: the water stood under

Beowulf Dreary and troubled. Unto all the Danes was it,
 To the friends of the Scyldings, most grievous in mood
 To many of thanes such a thing to be tholing,
 Sore evil to each one of earls, for of Aeschere
 The head did they find e'en there on the holm-cliff;
 The flood with gore welled (the folk looking on it),
 With hot blood. But whiles then the horn fell to singing
 A song of war eager. There sat down the band;
 They saw down the water a many of worm-kind,
 They see mar- Sea-drakes seldom seen a-kenning the sound;
 vellous beasts Likewise on the ness-bents nicors a-lying,
 Who oft on the undern-tide wont are to hold them
 A course full of sorrow all over the sail-road.
 Now the worms and the wild-deer away did they speed
 Bitter and wrath-swollen all as they heard it,
 The war-horn a-wailing: but one the Geats' warden
 With his bow of the shafts from his life-days there sunder'd,
 From his strife of the waves; so that stood in his life-parts
 The hard arrow of war; and he in the holm was
 The slower in swimming as death away swept him.
 So swiftly in sea-waves with boar-spears forsooth
 Sharp-hook'd and hard-press'd was he thereupon,
 Set on with fierce battle, and on to the ness tugg'd,
 The wondrous wave-bearer; and men were beholding
 The grisly guest.
 Beowulf therewith he gear'd him
 With weed of the earls: nowise of life reck'd he:
 Needs must his war-byrny, braided by hands,
 Wide, many-colour'd by cunning, the sound seek,
 E'en that which his bone-coffer knew how to ward,
 So that the war-grip his heart ne'er a while,
 The foe-snatch of the wrathful, his life ne'er should scathe;
 Therewith the white war-helm warded his head,
 E'en that which should mingle with ground of the mere,
 Of the Sword And seek the sound-welter, with treasure beworthy'd,
 Hrunting All girt with the lordly chains, as in days gone by
 The weapon-smith wrought it most wondrously done,

Beset with the swine-shapes, so that sithence
 The brand or the battle-blades never might bite it.
 Nor forsooth was that littlest of all of his mainstays,
 Which to him in his need lent the spokesman of Hrothgar,
 E'en the battle-sword hafted that had to name Hrunting,
 That in fore days was one of the treasures of old,
 The edges of iron with the poison twigs o'er-stain'd,
 With battle-sweat harden'd; in the brunt never fail'd he
 Any one of the warriors whose hand wound about him,
 Who in grisly wayfarings durst ever to wend him
 To the folk-stead of foemen. Not the first of times was it
 That battle-work doughty it had to be doing.
 Forsooth naught remember'd that son there of Ecglaf,
 The crafty in mighty deeds, what ere he quoth
 All drunken with wine, when the weapon he lent
 To a doughtier sword-wolf: himself naught he durst it
 Under war of the waves there his life to adventure
 And warrior-ship work. So forwent he the glory,
 The fair fame of valour. Naught far'd so the other
 Syth he to the war-tide had gear'd him to wend.

Beowulf

XXIII. BEOWULF REACHETH THE MERE-
 BOTTOM IN A DAY'S WHILE, AND CONTENTS
 WITH GRENDEL'S DAM.

OUT then spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
 "Forsooth be thou mindful, O great son of Healfdene,
 O praise of the princes, now way-fain am I,
 O gold-friend of men, what we twain spake aforetime:
 If to me for thy need it might so befall
 That I cease from my life-days, thou shouldest be ever
 To me, forth away wended, in the stead of a father.
 Do thou then bear in hand these thanes of my kindred,
 My hand-fellows, if so be battle shall have me;
 Those same treasures withal, which thou gavest me erst,
 O Hrothgar the lief, unto Hygelac send thou;
 By that gold then shall wot the lord of the Geat-folk,

Beowulf goes
 to the sea-
 ground

Beowulf

Shall Hrethel's son see, when he stares on the treasure,
That I in fair man-deeds a good one have found me,
A ring-giver; while I might, joy made I thereof.
And let thou then Unferth the ancient loom have,
The wave-sword adorned, that man kenned widely,
The blade of hard edges; for I now with Hrunting
Will work me the glory, or else shall death get me."

So after these words the Weder-Geats' chieftain
With might of heart hasten'd; nor for answer then would he
Aught tarry; the sea-welter straightway took hold on
The warrior of men: wore the while of a daytide
Or ever the ground-plain might he set eyes on.

Soon did she find, she who the flood-ring
Sword-ravening had held for an hundred of seasons,
Greedy and grim, that there one man of grooms
The abode of the alien-wights sought from above;
Then toward him she grasp'd and gat hold on the warrior
With fell clutch, but no sooner she scathed withinward
The hale body; rings from withoutward it warded,
That she could in no wise the war-skin clutch through,
The fast locked limb-sark, with fingers all loathly.
So bare then that sea-wolf when she came unto bottom
The king of the rings to the court-hall adown
In such wise that he might not, though hard-moody was he,
Be wielding of weapons. But a many of wonders
In sea-swimming swink'd him, and many a sea-deer
With his war-tusks was breaking his sark of the battle;
The fell wights him follow'd.

'Twas then the earl found it
That in foe-hall there was he, I wot not of which,
Where never the water might scathe him a whit,
Nor because of the roof-hall might reach to him there
The fear-grip of the flood. Now fire-light he saw,
The bleak beam forsooth all brightly a-shining.
Then the good one, he saw the Wolf of the ground,
The mere-wife the mighty, and main onset made he
With his battle-bill; never his hand withheld sword-swing,

So that there on her head sang the ring-sword forsooth
 The song of war greedy. But then found the guest
 That the beam of the battle would bite not therewith,
 Or scathe life at all, but there failed the edge
 The king in his need. It had ere thol'd a many
 Of meetings of hand; oft it sheared the helm,
 The host-rail of the fey one; and then was the first time
 For that treasure dear lov'd that its might lay a-low.

Beowulf

Hrunting will
 not bite on the
 carline

But therewithal steadfast, naught sluggish of valour,
 All mindful of high deeds was Hygelac's kinsman.
 Cast then the wounden blade bound with the gem-stones
 The warrior all angry, that it lay on the earth there,
 Stiff-wrought and steel-edged. In strength now he trusted,
 The hard hand-grip of might and main; so shall a man do
 When he in the war-tide yet looketh to winning
 The praise that is longsome, nor aught for life careth.
 Then fast by the shoulder, of the feud nothing recking,
 The lord of the War-Geats clutch'd Grendel's mother,
 Cast down the battle-hard, bollen with anger,
 That foe of the life, till she bow'd to the floor;
 But swiftly to him gave she back the hand-guerdon
 With hand-graspings grim, and griped against him;
 Then mood-weary stumbled the strongest of warriors,
 The foot-kemp, until that adown there he fell.
 Then she sat on the hall-guest and tugg'd out her sax,
 The broad and brown-edged, to wreak her her son,
 Her offspring her own. But lay yet on his shoulder
 The breast-net well braided, the berg of his life,
 That 'gainst point and 'gainst edge the entrance withstood.

Gone amiss then forsooth had been Ecgtheow's son
 Underneath the wide ground there, the Kemp of the Geats,
 Save to him his war-byrny had fram'd him a help,
 The hard host-net; and save that the Lord God the Holy
 Had wielded the war-gain, the Lord the All-wise;
 Save that the skies' Ruler had rightwisely doom'd it
 All easily. Sithence he stood up again.

XXIV. BEOWULF SLAYETH GRENDEL'S DAM,
SMITETH OFF GRENDEL'S HEAD, AND COM-
ETH BACK WITH HIS THANES TO HART.

Beowulf gets
an ancient
sword

MIDST the war-gear he saw then a bill victory-wealthy,
An old sword of eotens full doughty of edges,
The worship of warriors. That was choice of all weapons,
Save that more was it made than any man other
In the battle-play ever might bear it afield,
So goodly, all glorious, the work of the giants.
Then the girdled hilt seiz'd he, the Wolf of the Scyldings,
The rough and the sword-grim, and drew forth the ring-sword,
Naught weening of life, and wrathful he smote then
So that there on her halse the hard edge begripped,
And brake through the bone-rings: the bill all through-waded
Her flesh-sheathing fey; cring'd she down on the floor;
The sword was war-sweaty, the man in his work joy'd.
The bright beam shone forth, the light stood withinward,
E'en as down from the heavens' clear high aloft shineth
The sky's candle.

He slays
Grendel's
dam

He all along the house scanned;
Then turn'd by the wall along, heav'd up his weapon
Hard by the hilts the Hygelac's thane there,
Ireful one-reded; naught worthless the edge was
Unto the warrior; but rathely now would he
To Grendel make payment of many war-onsets,
Of them that he wrought on the folk of the West Danes
Oftener by mickle than one time alone;
Whenas he the hearthfellows of Hrothgar the King
Slew in their slumber and fretted them sleeping,
Men fifteen to wit of the folk of the Danes,
And e'en such another deal ferry'd off outward,
Loathly prey.

Now he paid him his guerdon therefor,
The fierce champion; so well, that abed there he saw
Where Grendel war-weary was lying adown
Forlorn of his life, as him ere had scathed

The battle at Hart; sprang wide the body,
Sithence after death he suffer'd the stroke,
The hard swing of sword. Then he smote the head off him.

Beowulf

Now soon were they seeing, those sage of the carles,
E'en they who with Hrothgar gaz'd down on the holm,
That the surge of the billows was blended about,
The sea stain'd with blood. Therewith the hoar-blended,
The old men, of the good one gat talking together
That they of the Atheling ween'd never eft-soon
That he, glad in his war-gain, should wend him a-seeking
The mighty king, since unto many it seemed
That him the mere-she-wolf had sunder'd and broken.
Came then nones of the day, and the ness there they gave up,
The Scyldings the brisk; and then busk'd him home thence-
ward

The Scyldings
flee. Beowulf
comes to land
again

The gold-friend of men. But the guests, there they sat
All sick of their mood, and star'd on the mere;
They wist not, they ween'd not if him their own friend-lord
Himself they should see.

Now that sword began
Because of the war-sweat into icicles war-made,
The war-bill, to wane: that was one of the wonders
That it melted away most like unto ice
When the bond of the frost the Father lets loosen,
Unwindeth the wave-ropes, e'en he that hath wielding
Of times and of seasons, who is the sooth Shaper.

In those wicks there he took not, the Weder-Geats' champion,
Of treasure-wealth more, though he saw there a many,
Than the off-smitten head and the sword-hilts together
With treasure made shifting; for the sword-blade was molten,
The sword broider'd was burn'd up, so hot was that blood,
So poisonous the alien ghost there that had died.
Now soon was a-swimming he who erst in the strife bode
The war-onset of wrath ones; he div'd up through the water;
And now were the wave-welters cleansed full well,
Yea the dwellings full wide, where the ghost of elsethither
Let go of his life-days and the waning of living.

XXV. CONVERSE OF HROTHGAR WITH BEOWULF.

SPAKE out then Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
"What! we the sea-spoils here to thee, son of Healfdene,
High Lord of the Scyldings, with lust have brought hither
For a token of glory, e'en these thou beholdest.
Now I all unsoftly with life I escaped,
In war under the water dar'd I the work
Full hard to be worked, and well-nigh there was
The sundering of strife, save that me God had shielded.
So it is that in battle naught might I with Hrunting
One whit do the work, though the weapon be doughty;
But to me then he granted, the Wielder of men,
That on wall I beheld there all beauteous hanging
An ancient sword might-endow'd (often he leadeth right
The friendless of men); so forth drew I that weapon.
In that onset I slew there, as hap then appaid me,
The herd of the house; then that bill of the host,
The broider'd sword, burn'd up, and that blood sprang forth
The hottest of battle-sweats; but the hilts thereof thenceforth
From the foemen I ferry'd. I wreaked the foul deeds,
The death-quelling of Danes, e'en as duly behoved.
Now this I behote thee, that here in Hart mayst thou
Sleep sorrowless henceforth with the host of thy men
And the thanes every one that are of thy people
Of doughty and young; that for them need thou dread not,
O high Lord of Scyldings, on that behalf soothly
Life-bale for the earls as erst thou hast done."

Then was the hilt golden to the ancient of warriors,
The hoary of host-leaders, into hand given,
The old work of giants; it turn'd to the owning,
After fall of the Devils, of the lord of the Danes,
That work of the wonder-smith, syth gave up the world
The fierce-hearted groom, the foeman of God,
The murder-beguilty, and there eke his mother;
Unto the wielding of world-kings it turned,

Of the hilt of
the Eoten-
sword

Beowulf

The best that there be betwixt of the sea-floods
Of them that in Scaney dealt out the scat.

Hrothgar gives
praise to Beo-
wulf

Now spake out Hrothgar, as he look'd on the hilts there,
The old heir-loom whereon was writ the beginning
Of the strife of the old time, whenas the flood slew,
The ocean a-gushing, that kin of the giants
As fiercely they fared. That was a folk alien
To the Lord everlasting; so to them a last guerdon
Through the welling of waters the Wielder did give.
So was on the sword-guards all of the sheer gold
By dint of the rune-staves rightly remarked,
Set down and said for whom first was that sword wrought,
And the choice of all irons erst had been done,
Wreath-hilted and worm-adorn'd. Then spake the wise one,
Healfdene's son, and all were gone silent:

Here he speaks
of Heremod as
a warning to
men

"Lo that may he say, who the right and the soothfast
Amid the folk frameth, and far back all remembers,
The old country's warden, that as for this earl here
Born better was he. Uprear'd is the fame-blast
Through wide ways far yonder, O Beowulf, friend mine,
Of thee o'er all peoples. Thou hold'st all with patience,
Thy might with mood-wisdom; I shall make thee my love good,
As we twain at first spake it. For a comfort thou shalt be
Granted long while and long unto thy people,
For a help unto heroes. Naught such became Heremod
To Ecgwela's offspring, the honourful Scyldings;
For their welfare naught wax'd he, but for felling in slaughter,
For the quelling of death to the folk of the Danes.
Mood-swollen he brake there his board-fellows soothly,
His shoulder-friends, until he sunder'd him lonely,
That mighty of princes, from the mirth of all men-folk.
Though him God the mighty in the joyance of might,
In main strength, exalted high over all men,
And framed him forth, yet fast in his heart grew
A breast-hoard blood-fierce; none of fair rings he gave
To the Danes as due doom would. Unmerry he dured
So that yet of that strife the trouble he suffer'd,

A folk-bale so longsome. By such do thou learn thee, Get thee hold of man-valour: this tale for thy teaching Old in winters I tell thee. 'Tis wonder to say it, How the high God almighty to the kindred of mankind Through his mind the wide-fashion'd deals wisdom about, Home and earlship; he owneth the wielding of all. At whiles unto love he letteth to turn The mood-thought of a man that is mighty of kindred, And in his land giveth him joyance of earth, And to have and to hold the high ward-burg of men, And sets so 'neath his wielding the deals of the world, Dominion wide reaching, that he himself may not In all his un wisdom of the ending bethink him. He wonneth well-faring, nothing him wasteth Sickness nor eld, nor the foe-sorrow to him Dark in mind waxeth, nor strife any where, The edge-hate, appeareth; but all the world for him Wends as he willeth, and the worse naught he wotteth.	Beowulf Hrothgar exhorts Beowulf
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XXVI. MORE CONVERSE OF HROTHGAR AND
BEOWULF: THE GEATS MAKE THEM READY
FOR DEPARTURE.

UNTIL that within him a deal of o'erthinking
Waxeth and groweth while sleepeth the warder,
The soul's herdsman; that slumber too fast is forsooth,
Fast bounden by troubles, the banesman all nigh,
E'en he that from arrow-bow evilly shooteth.
Then he in his heart under helm is besmitten
With a bitter shaft; not a whit then may he ward him
From the wry wonder-biddings of the ghost the all-wicked.
Too little he deems that which long he hath holden,
Wrath-greedy he covets; nor e'en for boast-sake gives
The rings fair beplated; and the forth-coming doom
Forgetteth, forheedeth, for that God gave him erewhile,
The Wielder of glory, a deal of the worship.
At the ending-stave then it after befalleth

Beowulf

That the shell of his body sinks fleeting away,
And falleth all fey; and another one fetcheth,
E'en one that undolefully dealeth the treasure,
The earl's gains of aforetime, and fear never heedeth.

"From the bale-envy ward thee, lief Beowulf, therefore,
Thou best of all men, and choose thee the better,
The redes everlasting; to o'erthinking turn not,
O mighty of champions! for now thy might breatheth
For a short while of time; but eft-soon it shall be
That sickness or edges from thy strength thee shall sunder,
Or the hold of the fire, or the welling of floods,
Or the grip of the sword-blade, or flight of the spear,
Or eld the all-evil: or the beaming of eyen
Shall fail and shall dim: then shall it be forthright
That thee, lordly man, the death over-masters.
E'en so I the Ring-Danes for an hundred of seasons
Did wield under the welkin and lock'd them by war
From many a kindred the Middle Garth over
With ash-spears and edges, in such wise that not ever
Under the sky's run of my foemen I reckon'd.
What! to me in my land came a shifting of that,
Came grief after game, sithence Grendel befell,
My foeman of old, mine ingoer soothly.
I from that onfall bore ever unceasing
Mickle mood-care; herefor be thanks to the Maker,
To the Lord everlasting, that in life I abided,
Yea, that I on that head all sword-gory there,
Now the old strife is over, with eyen should stare.
Go fare thou to settle, the feast-joyance dree thou,
O war-worshipp'd! unto us twain yet there will be
Mickle treasure in common when come is the morning."

They feast
again; they
go bedward:
the morrow

Glad of mood then the Geat was, and speedy he gat him
To go see the settle, as the sage one commanded.
Then was after as erst, that they of the might-fame,
The floor-sitters, fairly the feasting bedight them
All newly. The helm of the night loured over,
Dark over the host-men. Uprose all the doughty,

For he, the hoar-blended, would wend to his bed, Beowulf
That old man of the Scyldings. The Geat without measure,
The mighty shield-warrior, now willed him rest.
And soon now the hall-thane him of way-faring weary,
From far away come, forth show'd him the road,
E'en he who for courtesy cared for all things
Of the needs of the thane, e'en such as on that day
The farers o'er ocean would fainly have had.

 Rested then the wide-hearted; high up the house tower'd
Wide-gaping all gold-dight; within slept the guest;
Until the black raven, the blithe-hearted, boded
The heavens' joy: then was come thither a-hastening
The bright sun o'er the plains, and hasten'd the scathers,
The Athelings, once more aback to their people
All fain to be faring; and far away thence
Would the comer high-hearted go visit his keel.
Bade then the hard one Hrunting to bear,
The Ecglaf's son bade to take him his sword,
The iron well-lov'd; gave him thanks for the lending,
Quoth he that the war-friend for worthy he told,
Full of craft in the war; nor with word blam'd he aught
The edge of the sword. Hah! the high-hearted warrior.

 So whenas all way-forward, yare in their war-gear
Were the warriors, the dear one then went to the Danes,
To the high seat went the Atheling, whereas was the other;
The battle-bold warrior gave greeting to Hrothgar.

XXVII. BEOWULF BIDS HROTHGAR FARE-
WELL: THE GEATS FARE TO SHIP.

OUT then spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
 "As now we sea-farers have will to be saying,
 We from afar come, that now are we faintest
 Of seeking to Hygelac. Here well erst were we
 Serv'd as our wills would, and well thine avail was.
 If I on the earth then, be it e'en but a little,
 Of the love of thy mood may yet more be an-earning,
 O lord of the men-folk, than heretofore might I,
 Of the works of the battle yare then soon shall I be.
 If I should be learning, I over the flood's run,
 That the sitters about thee beset thee with dread,
 Even thee hating as otherwhile did they;
 Then thousands to theeward of thanes shall I bring
 For the helping of heroes. Of Hygelac wot I,
 The lord of the Geat-folk, though he be but a youngling,
 That shepherd of folk, that me will he further
 By words and by works, that well may I ward thee,
 And unto thine helping the spear-holt may bear,
 A main-staying mighty, whenas men thou art needing.
 And if therewith Hrethric in the courts of the Geat-house,
 The King's bairn, take hosting, then may he a many
 Of friends find him soothly: far countries shall be
 Better sought to by him who for himself is doughty."

Hrothgar's
farewell words
to Beowulf

Out then spake Hrothgar in answer to himward:
 "Thy word-saying soothly the Lord of all wisdom
 Hath sent into thy mind; never heard I more sagely
 In a life that so young was a man word be laying;
 Strong of might and main art thou and sage of thy mood,
 Wise the words of thy framing. Tell I this for a weening,
 If it so come to pass that the spear yet shall take,
 Or the battle all sword-grim, the son of that Hrethel,
 Or sickness or iron thine Alderman have,
 Thy shepherd of folk, and thou fast to life hold thee,
 Then no better than thee may the Sea-Geats be having

To choose for themselves, no one of the kings,
Hoard-warden of heroes, if then thou wilt hold
Thy kinsman's own kingdom.

Beowulf

Me liketh thy mood-heart,
The longer the better, O Beowulf the lief;
In such wise hast thou fared, that unto the folks now,
The folk of the Geats and the Gar-Danes withal,
In common shall peace be, and strife rest appeased
And the hatreds the doleful which erst they have dreed;
Shall become, whiles I wield it, this wide realm of ours,
Treasures common to either folk: many a one other
With good things shall greet o'er the bath of the gannet;
And the ring'd bark withal over sea shall be bringing
The gifts and love-tokens. The twain folks I know
Toward foeman toward friend fast-fashion'd together,
In every way blameless as in the old wise."

Then the refuge of warriors, he gave him withal,
Gave Healfdene's son, of treasures yet twelve;
And he bade him with those gifts to go his own people
To seek in all soundness, and swiftly come back.
Then kissed the King, he of noble kin gotten,
The lord of the Scyldings, that best of the thanes,
By the halse then he took him; from him fell the tears
From the blended of hoar hair. Of both things was there hoping
To the old, the old wise one; yet most of the other,
To wit, that they sithence each each might be seeing,
The high-heart in council. To him so lief was he
That he his breast-welling might nowise forbear,
But there in his bosom, bound fast in his heart-bonds,
After that dear man a longing dim-hidden
Burn'd against blood-tie.

So Beowulf thenceforth,
The gold-proud of warriors, trod the mould grassy,
Exulting in gold-store. The sea-ganger bided
Its owning-lord whereas at anchor it rode.
Then was there in going the gift of King Hrothgar
Oft highly accounted; yea, that was a king

Beowulf

In every wise blameless, till eld took from him eftsoon
The joyance of might, as it oft scathes a many.

XXVIII. BEOWULF COMES BACK TO HIS LAND. OF THE TALE OF THRYTHO.

Beowulf
cometh to his
own land

CAME a many to flood then all mighty of mood,
Of the bachelors were they, and ring-nets they bore,
The limb-sarks belocked. The land-warden noted
The earls' aback-faring, as erst he beheld them;
Then nowise with harm from the nose of the cliff
The guests there he greeted, but rode unto themward,
And quoth that full welcome to the folk of the Weders,
The bright-coated warriors were wending to ship.
Then was on the sand there the bark the wide-sided
With war-weed beladen, the ring-stemm'd as she lay there,
With mares and with treasure; uptower'd the mast
High over Hrothgar's wealth of the hoards.

He then to the boat-warden handsell'd a gold-bounden
Sword, so that sithence was he on mead-bench
Worthy'd the more for that very same wealth,
The heirloom. Sithence in the ship he departed
To stir the deep water; the Dane-land he left.
Then was by the mast there one of the sea-rails,
A sail, with rope made fast; thunder'd the sound-wood.
Not there the wave-floater did the wind o'er the billows
Waft off from its ways; the sea-wender fared,
Floated the foamy-neck'd forth o'er the waves,
The bounden-stemm'd over the streams of the sea;
Till the cliffs of the Geats there they gat them to wit,
The nesses well kenned. Throng'd up the keel then
Driven hard by the lift, and stood on the land.
Then speedy at holm was the hythe-warden yare,
E'en he who a long while after the lief men
Eager at stream's side far off had looked.
To the sand thereon bound he the wide-fathom'd ship
With anchor-bands fast, lest from them the waves' might

The wood that was winsome should drive thence awayward. Beowulf

Thereon bade he upbear the Athelings' treasures,
The fretwork and wrought gold. Not far from them thenceforth
To seek to the giver of treasures it was,
E'en Hygelac, Hrethel's son, where at home wonneth
Himself and his fellows hard by the sea-wall.
Brave was the builded house, bold king the lord was,
High were the walls, Hygd very young,
Wise and well-thriven, though few of winters
Under the burg-locks had she abided,
The daughter of Hæreth; naught was she dastard;
Nowise niggard of gifts to the folk of the Geats,
Of wealth of the treasures. But wrath Thrytho bore,
The folk-queen the fierce, wrought the crime-deed full fearful.
No one there durst it, the bold one, to dare,
Of the comrades beloved, save only her lord,
That on her by day with eyen he stare,
But if to him death-bonds predestin'd he count on,
Hand-wreathed; thereafter all rathely it was
After the hand-grip the sword-blade appointed,
That the cunning-wrought sword should show forth the deed,
Make known the murder-bale. Naught is such queenlike
For a woman to handle, though peerless she be,
That a weaver of peace the life should waylay,
For a shame that was lying, of a lief man of men;
But the kinsman of Hemming, he hinder'd it surely.

Of Hygd,
wife of
Hygelac. Of
Thrytho
also

Yet the drinkers of ale otherwise said they;
That folk-bales, which were lesser, she framed forsooth,
Lesser enmity-malice, since thence erst she was
Given gold-deck'd to the young one of champions,
She the dear of her lineage, since Offa's floor
Over the fallow flood by the lore of her father
She sought in her wayfaring. Well was she sithence
There on the man-throne mighty with good;
Her shaping of life well brooked she living;
High love she held toward the lord of the heroes;
Of all kindred of men by the hearsay of me

This means
Offa

Beowulf The best of all was he the twain seas beside,
 Of the measureless kindred; thereof Offa was
 For gifts and for war, the spear-keen of men,
 Beowulf comes Full widely beworthy'd, with wisdom he held
 to Hygelac's The land of his heritage. Thence awoke Eomær
 house For a help unto heroes, the kinsman of Hemming,
 The grandson of Garmund, the crafty in war-strife.

XXIX. BEOWULF TELLS HYGELAC OF HROTH-
 GAR: ALSO OF FREAWARU HIS DAUGHTER.

This means
 Hygelac

WENT his ways then the hard one, and he with his hand-shoal,
 Himself over the sand the sea-plain a-treading
 The warths wide away; shone the world's candle,
 The sun slop'd from the southward; so dreed they their journey,
 And went their ways stoutly unto where the earls' refuge,
 The banesman of Ongentheow all in his burgs there,
 The young king of war, the good, as they heard it,
 Was dealing the rings. Aright unto Hygelac
 Was Beowulf's speeding made knownen full swiftly,
 That there into the house-place that hedge of the warriors,
 His mate of the linden-board, living was come,
 Hale from the battle-play home to him houseward.
 Then rathe was beroomed, as the rich one was bidding,
 For the guests a-foot going the floor all withinward.
 Then sat in the face of him he from the fight sav'd,
 Kinsman by kinsman, whenas his man-lord
 In fair-sounding speech had greeted the faithful
 With mightyful words. With mead-skinking turned
 Hygelac asks Through the high house adown the daughter of Hæreth:
 of Beowulf's The people she loved: the wine-bucket bare she
 faring, and To the hands of the men.
 he answers

But now fell to Hygelac
 His very house-fellow in that hall the high
 To question full fairly, for wit-lust to-brake him,
 Of what like were the journeys the Sea-Geats had wended:
 "How befell you the sea-lode, O Beowulf lief,

When thou on a sudden bethought'st thee afar
 Over the salt water the strife to be seeking,
 The battle in Hart? or for Hrothgar forsooth
 The wide-kenned woe some whit didst thou mend,
 For that mighty of lords? I therefore the mood-care
 In woe-wellings seethed; trow'd not in the wending
 Of thee the lief man. A long while did I pray thee
 That thou the death-guest there should greet not a whit;
 Wouldst let those same South-Danes their own selves to settle
 The war-tide with Grendel. Now to God say I thank
 That thee, and thee sound, now may I see."

Beowulf

Out then spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
 "All undark it is, O Hygelac lord,
 That meeting the mighty, to a many of men;
 Of what like was the meeting of Grendel and me
 On that field of the deed, where he many a deal
 For the Victory-Scyldings of sorrow had framed,
 And misery for ever; but all that I awreaked,
 So that needeth not boast any kinsman of Grendel
 Any one upon earth of that uproar of dawn-dusk,
 Nay not who lives longest of that kindred the loathly
 Encompass'd of fenland.

"Thither first did I come
 Unto that ring-hall Hrothgar to greet;
 Soon unto me the great Healfdene's son,
 So soon as my heart he was wotting forsooth,
 Right against his own son a settle there showed.
 All that throng was in joy, nor life-long saw I ever
 Under vault of the heavens amidst any hall-sitters
 More mirth of the mead. There the mighty Queen whiles,
 Peace-sib of the folk, went all over the floor,
 To the young sons bade heart up; oft she there the ring-wreath
 Gave unto a man ere to settle she wended.
 At whiles fore the doughty the daughter of Hrothgar
 To the earls at the end the ale-bucket bore;
 E'en she whom Freawaru the floor-sitters thereat
 Heard I to name; where she the nail'd treasure

Of Freawaru.
 A tale of
 ill hap

Beowulf
This means
Ingeld

Gave to the warriors. She was behight then
Youngling and gold-dight to the glad son of Froda.
This hath seemed fair to the friend of the Scyldings,
The herd of the realm, and good rede he accounts it,
That he with that wife of death-feuds a deal
And of strifes should allay. Oft unseldom eachwhere
After a lord's fall e'en but for a little
Bows down the bane-spear, though doughty the bride be."

XXX. BEOWULF FOREBODES ILL FROM THE WEDDING OF FREAWARU: HE TELLS OF GREDEL AND HIS DAM.

This means
Ingeld

ILL-LIKING this may be to the lord of the Heathobards,
And to each of the thanes of that same people,
When he with fair bride on the floor of hall wendeth,
That the Dane's noble bairn his doughty should wait on,
As on him glisten there the heirlooms of the aged,
Hard and with rings bedight, Heathobards' treasure,
Whileas the weapons yet they might wield;
Till astray did they lead there at the lind-play
Their own fellows belov'd and their very own lives.
For then saith at the beer, he who seeth the ring,
An ancient ash-warrior who mindeth of all
The spear-death of men; grim is he of mind;
Sad of mood he beginneth to tell the young champion,
Through the thought of his heart his mind there to try,
The war-bale to waken, and sayeth this word:

To wit, an old
warrior of the
Heathobards
eggs a young
champion to
avenge his
father's death
on Freawaru's
Danish thane

"Mayest thou, friend mine, wot of the war-sword,
That which thy father bore in the fight
Under the war-mask e'en on the last time,
That the dear iron, whereas the Danes slew him,
Wielded the death-field, since Withergyld lay,
After fall of the heroes, the keen-hearted Scyldings?
Now here of those banesmen the son, whoso he be,
All merry in fretwork forth on floor fareth;
Of the murder he boasteth, and that jewel he beareth,

E'en that which of right thou shouldest arede.'

Beowulf

"Thus he mindeth and maketh word every of times,
With sore words he telleth, until the time cometh
That the thane of the fair bride for the deeds of his father
After bite of the bill sleepeth all blood-stain'd,
All forfeit of life; but thenceforth the other
Escapeth alive; the land well he kenneth;
Then will be broken on both sides forsooth
The oath-swearing of earls, whenas unto Ingeld
Well up the death-hatreds, and the wife-loves of him
Because of the care-wellings cooler become.
Therefore the Heathobards' faith I account not,
Their deal of the folk-peace, unguileful to Danes,
Their fast-bounden friendship.

"Henceforth must I speak on

Again about Grendel, that thou get well to know it,
O treasure-outdealer, how sithence betided
The hand-race of heroes: sithence heaven's gem
All over the grounds glided, came the wroth guest,
The dire night-angry one us to go look on
Whereas we all sound were warding the hall.
There then for Handshoe was battle abiding,
Life-bale to the fey; he first lay alow,
The war-champion girded; unto him became Grendel,
To the great thane of kindreds, a banesman of mouth,
Of the man well-beloved the body he swallow'd;
Nor the sooner therefor out empty-handed
The bloody-tooth'd banesman, of bales all bemindful,
Out from that gold-hall yet would he get him;
But he, mighty of main, made trial of me,
And gripp'd ready-handed. His glove hung aloft,
Wondrous and wide, in wily bands fast,
With cunning wiles was it be geared forsooth,
With crafts of the devils and fells of the dragons;
He me withinwards there, me the unsinuing,
The doer of big deeds would do me to be
As one of the many; but naught so it might be,

Beowulf tells
of Grendel

A warrior of
the Geats

Beowulf

Sithence in mine anger upright I stood.

“’Tis over-long telling how I to the folk-scather
For each one of evils out paid the hand-gild.
There I, O my lord king, them thy leal people
Worthy’d with works: but away he gat loosed
Out thence for a little while, brooked yet life-joys;
But his right hand held ward of his track howsoever,
High upon Hart-hall, and thence away humble
He sad of his mood to the mere-ground fell downward.

“Me for that slaughter-race the Friend of the Scyldings
With gold that beplated was mickle deal paid,
With a many of treasures, sithence came the morning,
And we to the feast-tide had sat us adown;
Song was and glee there; the Elder of Scyldings,
Asking of many things, told of things o’erpast;
Whiles hath the battle-deer there the harp’s joy,
The wood of mirth greeted; whiles the lay said he
Soothfast and sorrowful; whiles a spell seldom told
Told he by right, the king roomy-hearted;
Whiles began afterward he by eld bounden,
The aged hoar warrior, of his youth to bewail him,
Its might of the battle; his breast well’d within him,
When he, wont in winters, of many now minded.

And of
Grendel’s dam

“So we there withinward the livelong day’s wearing
Took pleasure amongst us, till came upon men
Another of nights; then eftsoons again
Was yare for the harm-wreak the mother of Grendel:
All sorry she wended, for her son death had taken,
The war-hate of the Weders: that monster of women
Awreaked her bairn, and quelled a warrior
In manner all mighty. Then was there from Aeschere,
The wise man of old, life waning away;
Nor him might they even when come was the morning,
That death-weary wight, the folk of the Danes
Burn up with the brand, nor lade on the bale
The man well-belov’d, for his body she bare off

In her fathom the fiendly all under the fell-stream.

Beowulf

“That was unto Hrothgar of sorrows the heaviest
Of them which the folk-chieftain long had befallen.
Then me did the lord king, and e’en by thy life,
Mood-heavy beseech me that I in the holm-throng
Should do after earlship, my life to adventure,
And frame me main-greatness, and meed he behight me.
Then I of the welling flood, which is well kenned,
The grim and the grisly ground-herder did find.
There to us for a while was the blending of hands;
The holm welled with gore, and the head I becarved
In that hall of the ground from the mother of Grendel
With the all-eked edges; unsoftly out thence
My life forth I ferry’d, for not yet was I fey.
But the Earls’ burg to me was giving thereafter
Much sort of the treasures, e’en Healfdene’s son.”

XXXI. BEOWULF GIVES HROTHGAR’S GIFTS
TO HYGELAC, AND BY HIM IS REWARDED.
OF THE DEATH OF HYGELAC AND OF HEARD-
RED HIS SON, AND HOW BEOWULF IS KING
OF THE GEATS: THE WORM IS FIRST TOLD OF.

S O therewith the folk-king far’d, living full seemly;
By those wages forsooth ne’er a whit had I lost,
By the meed of my main, but to me treasure gave he,
The Healfdene’s son, to the doom of myself;
Which to thee, king of bold ones, will I be a-bringing,
And gladly will give thee; for of thee is all gotten
Of favours along, and but little have I
Of head-kinsmen forsooth, saving, Hygelac, thee.”

Then he bade them bear in the boar-shape, the head-sign, Of those gifts
The battle-steep war-helm, the byrny all hoary,
The sword stately-good, and spell after he said:
“This raiment of war Hrothgar gave to my hand,
The wise of the kings, and therewithal bade me,
That I first of all of his favour should flit thee;

Beowulf
Hrothgar's
elder brother

To whom the
gifts were
given.
Praise of
Beowulf.

He quoth that first had it King Heorogar of old,
The King of the Scyldings, a long while of time;
But no sooner would he give it unto his son,
Heoroward the well-whet, though kind to him were he,
This weed of the breast. Do thou brook it full well."

On these fretworks, so heard I, four horses therewith,
All alike, close followed after the track,
Steeds apple-fallow. Fair grace he gave him
Of horses and treasures. E'en thus shall do kinsman,
And nowise a wile-net shall weave for another
With craft of the darkness, or do unto death
His very hand-fellow. But now unto Hygelac
The bold in the battle, was his nephew full faithful,
And either to other of good deeds was mindful.
I heard that the neck-ring to Hygd did he give,
E'en the wonder-gem well-wrought, that Wealhtheow gave him,
The king's daughter; gave he three steeds therewithal
Slender, and saddle-bright; sithence to her was,
After the ring-gift, the breast well beworthy'd.

Thus boldly he bore him, the Ecgtheow's bairn,
The groom kenned in battle, in good deeds a-doing;
After due doom he did, and ne'er slew he the drunken
Hearth-fellows of him: naught rough was his heart;
But of all men of mankind with the greatest of might
The gift fully and fast set, which had God to him given,
That war-deer did hold. Long was he contemned,
While the bairns of the Geats naught told him for good,
Nor him on the mead-bench worthy of mickle
The lord of the war-hosts would be a-making.
Weened they strongly that he were but slack then,
An atheling unkeen; then came about change
To the fame-happy man for every foul harm.

Of Beowulf
and how he
waxed old.
Of the Drake

Bade then the Earls' burg in to be bringing,
The king battle-famed, the leaving of Hrethel,
All geared with gold; was not 'mid the Geats then
A treasure-gem better of them of the sword-kind,

That which then on Beowulf's barm there he laid;
 And gave to him there seven thousand in gift,
 A built house and king-stool; to both them together
 Was in that folkship land that was kindly,
 Father-right, home; to the other one rather
 A wide realm, to him who was there the better.
 But thereafter it went so in days later worn
 Through the din of the battle, sithence Hygelac lay low
 And unto Heardred swords of the battle
 Under the war-board were for a bane;
 When fell on him midst of this victory-folk
 The hard battle-wolves, the Scylfings of war,
 And by war overwhelmed the nephew of Hereric;
 That sithence unto Beowulf turned the broad realm
 All into his hand. Well then did he hold it
 For a fifty of winters; then was he an old king,
 An old fatherland's warder; until one began
 Through the dark of the night-tide, a drake, to hold sway,
 In a howe high aloft watched over an hoard,
 A stone-burg full steep; thereunder a path sty'd
 Unknown unto men, and therewithin wended
 Who of men do I know not; for his lust there took he,
 From the hoard of the heathen his hand took away
 A hall-bowl gem-flecked, nowise back did he give it,
 Though the herd of the hoard him sleeping beguil'd he
 With thief-craft; and this then found out the king,
 The best of folk-heroes, that wrath-bollen was he.

Beowulf

This means
 Heardred, son
 of Hygelac

XXXII. HOW THE WORM CAME TO THE
HOWE, & HOW HE WAS ROBBED OF A CUP;
AND HOW HE FELL ON THE FOLK.

NOT at all with self-wielding the craft of the worm-hoards
He sought of his own will, who sore himself harmed;
But for threat of oppression a thrall, of I wot not
Which bairn of mankind, from blows wrathful fled,
House-needy forsooth, and hied him therein,
A man by guilt troubled. Then soon it betided
That therein to the guest there stood grisly terror;
However the wretched, of every hope waning

The ill-shapen wight, whenas the fear gat him,
The treasure-vat saw; of such there was a many
Up in that earth-house of treasures of old,
As them in the yore-days, though what man I know not,
The huge leavings and loom of a kindred of high ones,
Well thinking of thoughts there had hidden away,
Dear treasures. But all them had death borne away
In the times of erewhile; and the one at the last
Of the doughty of that folk that there longest lived,
There waxed he friend-sad, yet ween'd he to tarry,
That he for a little those treasures the longsorne
Might brook for himself. But a burg now all ready
Wonn'd on the plain nigh the waves of the water,
New by a ness, by narrow-crafts fasten'd;
Within there then bare of the treasures of earls
That herd of the rings a deal hard to carry,
Of gold fair beplated, and few words he quoth:
"Hold thou, O earth, now, since heroes may hold not,
The owning of earls. What! it erst within thee
Good men did get to them; now war-death hath gotten,
Life-bale the fearful, each man and every
Of my folk; e'en of them who forwent the life:
The hall-joy had they seen. No man to wear sword

The words of
the lord of a
perished folk

I own, none to brighten the beaker beplated,
 The dear drink-vat; the doughty have sought to else-whither.
 Now shall the hard war-helm bedight with the gold
 Be bereft of its plating; its polishers sleep,
 They that the battle-mask erewhile should burnish :
 Likewise the war-byrny, which abode in the battle
 O'er break of the war-boards the bite of the irons,
 Crumbles after the warrior; nor may the ring'd byrny
 After the war-leader fare wide afield
 On behalf of the heroes: nor joy of the harp is,
 No game of the glee-wood; no goodly hawk now
 Through the hall swingeth; no more the swift horse
 Beateth the burg-stead. Now hath bale-quelling
 A many of life-kin forth away sent."

Beowulf

Suchwise sad-moody moaned in sorrow
 One after all, unblithely bemoaning
 By day and by night, till the welling of death
 Touch'd at his heart.

The old twilight-scather
 Found the hoard's joyance standing all open,
 E'en he that, burning, seeketh to burgs,
 The evil drake, naked, that flieth a night-tide,
 With fire encompass'd; of him the earth-dwellers
 Are strongly adrad; wont is he to seek to
 The hoard in the earth, where he the gold heathen
 Winter-old wardeth; nor a whit him it betters.

Of the
 Drake and
 his wrath

So then the folk-scather for three hundred winters
 Held in the earth a one of hoard-houses
 All-eked of craft, until him there anger'd
 A man in his mood, who bare to his man-lord
 A beaker beplated, and bade him peace-warding
 Of his lord: then was lightly the hoard searched over,
 And the ring-hoard off borne; and the boon it was granted
 To that wretched-wrought man.

There then the lord saw
 That work of men foregone the first time of times.

Beowulf

Then awaken'd the Worm, and anew the strife was;
Along the stone stank he, the stout-hearted found
The foot-track of the foe; he had stept forth o'er-far
With dark craft, over-nigh to the head of the drake.

So may the man unfey full easily outlive
The woe and the wrack-journey, he who the Wielder's
Own grace is holding.

Now sought the hoard-warden
Eager over the ground; for the groom he would find
Who unto him sleeping had wrought out the sore:
Hot and rough-moody oft he turn'd round the howe
All on the outward; but never was any man
On the waste; but however in war he rejoiced,
In battle-work. Whiles he turn'd back to his howe
And sought to his treasure-vat; soon he found this,
That one of the grooms had proven the gold,
The high treasures; then the hoard-warden abided,
But hardly forsooth, until come was the even,
And all anger-bollen was then the burg-warden,
And full much would the loath one with the fire-flame pay back,
For his drink-vat the dear. Then day was departed
E'en at will to the Worm, and within wall no longer
Would he bide, but awayward with burning he fared,
All dight with the fire: it was fearful beginning
To the folk in the land, and all swiftly it fell
On their giver of treasure full grievously ended.

The Worm
begins war

XXXIII. THE WORM BURNS BEOWULF'S
HOUSE, AND BEOWULF GETS READY TO GO
AGAINST HIM. BEOWULF'S EARLY DEEDS IN
BATTLE WITH THE HETWARE TOLD OF.

BEGAN then the guest to spew forth of gleeds,
The bright dwellings to burn; stood the beam of the burning
For a mischief to men-folk; now nothing that quick was
The loathly lift-flier would leave there forsooth;
The war of the Worm was wide to be seen there,
The narrowing foe's hatred anigh and afar,
How he, the fight-scather, the folk of the Geats
Hated and harm'd; shot he back to the hoard,
His dark lordly hall, ere yet was the day's while;
The land-dwellers had he in the light low encompass'd
With bale and with brand; in his burg yet he trusted,
His war-might and his wall: but his weening bewray'd him.

The Worm
begins war

Then Beowulf was done to wit of the terror
Full swiftly forsooth, that the house of himself,
Best of buildings, was molten in wellings of fire,
The gift-stool of the Geats. To the good one was that
A grief unto heart; of mind-sorrows the greatest.
Weened the wise one, that Him, e'en the Wielder,
The Lord everlasting, against the old rights
He had bitterly anger'd; the breast boil'd within him
With dark thoughts, that to him were naught duly wonted.

Now had the fire-drake the own fastness of folk,
The water-land outward, that ward of the earth,
With gleeds to ground wasted; so therefore the war-king,
The lord of the Weder-folk, learned him vengeance.
Then he bade be work'd for him, that fence of the warriors,
And that all of iron, the lord of the earls,
A war-board all glorious, for wissed he yarely
That the holt-wood hereto might help him no whit,
The linden 'gainst fire-flame.

Beowulf
makes
ready

Of fleeting days now
The Atheling exceeding good end should abide,

Beowulf

The end of the world's life, and the Worm with him also,
Though long he had holden the weal of the hoard.
Forsooth scorned then the lord of the rings
That he that wide-flier with war-band should seek,
With a wide host; he fear'd not that war for himself,
Nor for himself the Worm's war accounted one whit,
His might and his valour, for that he erst a many
Strait-daring of battles had bided, and liv'd,
Clashings huge of the battle, sithence he of Hrothgar,
He, the man victory-happy, had cleansed the hall,
And in war-tide had gripped the kindred of Grendel,
The loathly of kindreds; nor was that the least
Of hand-meetings, wherein erst was Hygelac slain,
Sithence the Geats' king in the onrush of battle,
The lord-friend of the folks, down away in the Frieslands,
The offspring of Hrethel, died, drunken of sword-drinks,
All beaten of bill. Thence Beowulf came forth
By his own craft forsooth, dreed the work of the swimming;
He had on his arm, he all alone, thirty
Of war-gears, when he to the holm went adown.
Then nowise the Hetware needed to joy them
Over the foot-war, wherein forth against him
They bore the war-linden: few went back again
From that wolf of the battle to wend to their homes.

Of feuds of
old time

O'erswam then the waters' round Ecgtheow's son,
Came all wretched and byrd-alone back to his people,
Whereas offer'd him Hygd then the kingdom and hoard,
The rings and the king-stool: trowed naught in the child,
That he 'gainst folks outland the fatherland-seats
Might can how to hold, now was Hygelac dead:
Yet no sooner therefor might the poor folk prevail
To gain from the Atheling in any of ways
That he unto Heardred would be for a lord,
Or eke that that kingdom henceforward should choose;
Yet him midst of the folk with friend-lore he held,
All kindly with honour till older he waxed
And wielded the Weder-Geats. To him men-waifs thereafter

Sought from over the sea, the sons they of Ohthere,
 For they erst had withstood the Helm of the Scylfings,
 E'en him that was best of the kings of the sea,
 Of them that in Swede-realm dealt out the treasure,
 The mighty of princes. Unto him 'twas a life-mark;
 To him without food there was fated the life-wound,
 That Hygelac's son, by the swinging of swords;
 And him back departed Ongentheow's bairn,
 To go seek to his house, sithence Heardred lay dead,
 And let Beowulf hold the high seat of the king
 And wield there the Geats. Yea, good was that king.

Beowulf
 Eadmund and
 Eadgils.
 Onela
 Death of
 Heardred
 Onela

XXXIV. BEOWULF GOES AGAINST THE WORM. HE TELLS OF HEREBEALD AND HÆTHCYN.

OF that fall of the folk-king he minded the payment
 In days that came after: unto Eadgils he was
 A friend to him wretched; with folk he upheld him
 Over the wide sea, that same son of Ohthere,
 With warriors and weapons. Sithence had he wreaking
 With cold journeys of care: from the king took he life.

Beowulf erst
 avenged the
 death of
 Heardred

Now each one of hates thus had he outlived,
 And of perilous slaughters, that Ecgtheow's son,
 All works that be doughty, until that one day
 When he with the Worm should wend him to deal.

Onela

So twelvesome he set forth all swollen with anger,
 The lord of the Geats, the drake to go look on.
 Aright had he learnt then whence risen the feud was,
 The bale-hate against men-folk: to his barm then had come
 The treasure-vat famous by the hand of the finder;
 He was in that troop of men the thirteenth
 Who the first of that battle had set upon foot,
 The thrall, the sad-minded; in shame must he thenceforth
 Wise the way to the plain; and against his will went he
 Thereunto, where the earth-hall, the one there he wist,
 The howe under earth anigh the holm's welling,
 The wave-strife: there was it now full all within

Beowulf With gems and with wires; the monster, the warden,
The yare war-wolf, he held him therein the hoard golden,
The old under the earth: it was no easy cheaping
To go and to gain for any of grooms.

Beowulf bids
his folk
farewell Sat then on the ness there the strife-hardy king
While farewell he bade to his fellows of hearth,
The gold-friend of the Geats; sad was gotten his soul,
Wavering, death-minded; Weird nigh beyond measure,
Which him old of years gotten now needs must be greeting,
Must seek his soul's hoard and asunder must deal
His life from his body: no long while now was
The life of the Atheling in flesh all bewounded.

Hæthcyn slays
Herebeald by
mishap Now spake out Beowulf, Ecgtheow's bairn:
"Many a one in my youth of war-onsets I outliv'd,
And the whiles of the battle: all that I remember.
Seven winters had I when the wielder of treasures,
The lord-friend of folk, from my father me took,
Held me and had me Hrethel the King,
Gave me treasure and feast, and remember'd the friendship.
For life thence I was not to him a whit loather,
A berne in his burgs, than his bairns were, or each one,
Herebeald, or Hæthcyn, or Hygelac mine.
For the eldest there was in unseemly wise
By the mere deed of kinsman a murder-bed strawn,
Whenas him did Hæthcyn from out of his horn-bow,
His lord and his friend, with shaft lay alow:
His mark he miss'd shooting, and shot down his kinsman,
One brother another with shaft all bebloody'd;
That was fight feeless by fearful crime sinned,
Soul-weary to heart, yet nathelless then had
The Atheling from life all unwreak'd to be ceasing.
"So sad-like it is for a carle that is aged
To be biding the while that his boy shall be riding
Yet young on the gallows; then a lay should he utter,
A sorrowful song whenas hangeth his son

A gain unto ravens, and naught good of avail
 May he, old and exceeding old, anywise frame.
 Ever will he be minded on every each morning
 Of his son's faring otherwhere; nothing he heedeth
 Of abiding another withinward his burgs,
 An heritage-warder, then whenas the one
 By the very death's need hath found out the ill.
 Sorrow-careful he seeth within his son's bower
 The waste wine-hall, the resting-place now of the winds,
 All bereft of the revel; the riders are sleeping,
 The heroes in grave, and no voice of the harp is,
 No game in the garths such as erewhile was gotten."

Beowulf

Yet he tells of
 past days

Hrethel will
 not be com-
 forted

XXXV. BEOWULF TELLS OF PAST FEUDS, AND BIDS FAREWELL TO HIS FELLOWS: HE FALLS ON THE WORM, AND THE BATTLE OF THEM BEGINS.

THEN to sleeping-stead wendeth he, singeth he sorrow,
 The one for the other; o'er-roomy all seem'd him
 The meads and the wick-stead. So the Helm of the Weders
 For Herebeald's sake the sorrow of heart
 All welling yet bore, and in nowise might he
 On the banesman of that life the feud be a-booting;
 Nor ever the sooner that warrior might hate
 With deeds loathly, though he to him nothing was lief.

"He then with the sorrow wherewith that sore beset him
 Man's joy-tide gave up, and chose him God's light.
 To his offspring he left, e'en as wealthy man doeth,
 His land and his folk-burges when he from life wended.

"Then sin was and striving of Swedes and of Geats,
 Over the wide water war-tide in common,
 The hard horde-hate to wit sithence Hrethel perish'd;
 And to them ever were the Ongentheow's sons
 Doughty and host-whetting, nowise then would friendship
 Hold over the waters; but round about Hreosnaburgh
 The fierce fray of foeman was oftentimes fram'd.

And yet more

Beowulf	Kin of friends that mine were, there they awreaked The feud and the evil deed, e'en as was famed; Although he, the other, with his own life he bought it, A cheaping full hard: unto Hæthcyn it was, To the lord of the Geat-folk, a life-fateful war.
Eofor avenges his brother on Ongentheow	Learned I that the morrow one brother the other With the bills' edges wreaked the death on the banesman, Whereas Ongentheow is a-seeking of Eofor: Glode the war-helm asunder, the aged of Scylfings Fell, sword-bleak; e'en so remember'd the hand Feud enough; nor e'en then did the life-stroke withhold.
Hrethel and Beowulf	I to him for the treasure which erewhile he gave me Repaid it in warring, as was to me granted, With my light-gleaming sword. To me gave he land, The hearth and the home-bliss: unto him was no need That unto the Gifthas or unto the Spear-Danes Or into the Swede-realm he needs must go seeking A worse wolf of war for a worth to be cheaping; For in the host ever would I be before him Alone in the fore-front, and so life-long shall I Be a-framing of strife, whileas tholeth the sword, Which early and late hath bestead me full often, Sithence was I by doughtiness unto Day-raven The hand-bane erst waxen, to the Champion of Hug-folk; He nowise the fretwork to the King of the Frisians, The breast-worship to wit, might bring any more, But cringed in battle that herd of the banner, The Atheling in might: the edge naught was his bane, But for him did the war-grip the heart-wellings of him Break, the house of the bones. Now shall the bill's edge, The hand and hard sword, about the hoard battle."
His last greeting	

So word uttered Beowulf, spake out the boast-word
 For the last while as now: "Many wars dared I
 In the days of my youth, and now will I yet,
 The old warder of folk, seek to the feud,
 Full gloriously frame, if the scather of foul-deed

From the hall of the earth me out shall be seeking."

Greeted he then each one of the grooms,
The keen wearers of helms, for the last while of whiles,
His own fellows the dear: "No sword would I fare with,
No weapon against the Worm, wist I but how
'Gainst the monster of evil in otherwise might I
Uphold me my boast, as erst did I with Grendel;
But there fire of the war-tide full hot do I ween me,
And the breath, and the venom; I shall bear on me therefore
Both the board and the byrny; nor the burg's warden shall I
Overflee for a foot's-breadth, but unto us twain
It shall be at the wall as to us twain Weird willeth,
The Maker of each man. Of mood am I eager;
So that 'gainst that war-flier from boast I withhold me.
Abide ye upon burg with your byrnies bewarded,
Ye men in your battle-gear, which may the better
After the slaughter-race save us from wounding
Of the twain of us. Naught is it yours to take over,
Nor the measure of any man save alone me,
That he on the monster should mete out his might,
Or work out the earlship: but I with my main might
Shall gain me the gold, or else gets me the battle,
The perilous life-bale, e'en me your own lord."

Arose then by war-round the warrior renowned
Hard under helm, and the sword-sark he bare
Under the stone-cliffs: in the strength then he trowed
Of one man alone; no dastard's way such is.
Then he saw by the wall (e'en he, who so many,
The good of man-bounties, of battles had out-liv'd,
Of crashes of battle whenas hosts were blended)
A stone-bow a-standing, and from out thence a stream
Breaking forth from the burg; was that burn's outwelling
All hot with the war-fire; and none nigh to the hoard then
Might ever unburning any while bide,
Live out through the deep for the flame of the drake.
Out then from his breast, for as bollen as was he,

Beowulf Let the Weder-Geats' chief the words be out faring;
 The stout-hearted storm'd and the stave of him enter'd
 Battle-bright sounding in under the hoar stone.
 Then uproused was hate, and the hoard-warden wotted
 The speech of man's word, and no more while there was
 Friendship to fetch.

Beowulf
dares the
Worm Then forth came there first
 The breath of the evil beast out from the stone,
 The hot sweat of battle, and dinn'd then the earth.
 The warrior beneath the burg swung up his war-round
 Against that grisly guest, the lord of the Geats;
 Then the heart of the ring-bow'd grew eager therewi th
 To seek to the strife. His sword ere had he drawn,
 That good lord of the battle, the leaving of old,
 The undull of edges: there was unto either
 Of the bale-minded ones the fear of the other.

The beginning
of the Battle All steadfast of mind stood against his steep shield
 The lord of the friends, when the Worm was a-bowing
 Together all swiftly, in war-gear he bided;
 Then boune was the burning one, bow'd in his going,
 To the fate of him faring. The shield was well warding
 The life and the lyke of the mighty lord king
 For a lesser of whiles than his will would have had it,
 If he at that frist on the first of the day
 Was to wield him, as Weird for him never will'd it,
 The high-day of battle. His hand he up braided,
 The lord of the Geats, and the grisly-fleck'd smote he
 With the leaving of Ing, in such wise that the edge fail'd,
 The brown blade on the bone, and less mightily bit
 Than the king of the nation had need in that stour,
 With troubles beset.

But then the burg-warden
 After the war-swing all wood of his mood
 Cast forth the slaughter-flame, sprung thereon widely
 The battle-gleams: nowise of victory he boasted,
 The gold-friend of the Geats; his war-bill had falter'd,
 All naked in war, in such wise as it should not,

The iron exceeding good. Naught was it easy
 For him there, the mighty-great offspring of Ecgtheow,
 That he now that earth-plain should give up for ever;
 But against his will needs must he dwell in the wick
 Of the otherwhere country; as ever must each man
 Let go of his loan-days.

Beowulf

Not long was it thenceforth
 Ere the fell ones of fight fell together again.
 The hoard-warden up-hearten'd him, welled his breast
 With breathing anew. Then narrow need bore he,
 Encompass'd with fire, who erst the folk wielded;
 Nowise in a heap his hand-fellows there,
 The bairns of the Athelings, stood all about him
 In valour of battle; but they to holt bow'd them;
 Their dear life they warded; but in one of them welled
 His soul with all sorrow. So sib-ship may never
 Turn aside any whit to the one that well thinketh.

Beowulf hard
 bestead

XXXVI. WIGLAF SON OF WEOHSTAN GOES TO
 THE HELP OF BEOWULF: NÆGLING, BEO-
 WULF'S SWORD, IS BROKEN ON THE WORM.

WIGLAF so hight he, the son of Weohstan,
 Lief linden-warrior, and lord of Scylfings,
 The kinsman of Aelf here: and he saw his man-lord
 Under his host-mask tholing the heat;
 He had mind of the honour that to him gave he erewhile,
 The wick-stead the wealthy of them, the Wægmundings,
 And the folk-rights each one which his father had owned.
 Then he might not withhold him, his hand gripp'd the round,
 Yellow linden; he tugg'd out withal the old sword,
 That was known among men for the heirloom of Eanmund,
 Ohthere's son, unto whom in the strife did become,
 To the exile unfriended, Weohstan for the bane
 With the sword-edge, and unto his kinsmen bare off
 The helm the brown-brindled, the byrny beringed,
 And the old eoten-sword that erst Onela gave him;

Beowulf
Weohstan,
father of Wig-
laf, spake not of
the feud,
though he had
slain Eanmund,
the son of
Onela's brother

Were they his kinsman's weed of the war,
Host-fight-gear all ready. Of the feud nothing spake he,
Though he of his brother the bairn had o'erthrown.
But the host-gear befretted he held many seasons,
The bill and the byrny, until his own boy might
Do him the earlship as did his ere-father.
Amidst of the Geats then he gave him the war-weed
Of all kinds unnumber'd, whenas he from life wended
Old on the forth-way.

Then was the first time
For that champion the young that he the war-race
With his high lord the famed e'er he should frame:
Naught melted his mood, naught the loom of his kinsman
Weaken'd in war-tide; that found out the Worm
When they two together had gotten to come.

Wiglafeggs
on the men

Now spake out Wiglaf many words rightwise,
And said to his fellows: all sad was his soul:
"I remember that while when we gat us the mead,
And whenas we behight to the high lord of us
In the beer-hall, e'en he who gave us these rings,
That we for the war-gear one while would pay,
If unto him thislike need e'er should befall,
For these helms and hard swords. So he chose us from host
To this faring of war by his very own will,
Of glories he minded us, and gave me these gems here,
Whereas us of gar-warriors he counted for good,
And bold bearers of helms. Though our lord e'en for us
This work of all might was of mind all alone
Himself to be framing, the herd of the folk,
Whereas most of all men he hath mightiness framed,
Of deeds of all daring, yet now is the day come
Whereon to our man-lord behoveth the main
Of good battle-warriors; so thereunto wend we,
And help we the host-chief, whiles that the heat be,
The gleed-terror grim. Now of me wotteth God
That to me is much liefer that that, my lyke-body,
With my giver of gold the gleed should engrip.

Unmeet it methinketh that we shields should bear
 Back unto our own home, unless we may erst
 The foe fell adown and the life-days defend
 Of the King of the Weders. Well wot I hereof
 That his old deserts naught such were, that he only
 Of all doughty of Geats the grief should be bearing,
 Sink at strife. Unto us shall one sword be, one helm,
 One byrny and shield, to both of us common."

Beowulf

Through the slaughter-reek waded he then, bare his war-helm
 To the finding his lord, and few words he quoth:

"O Beowulf the dear, now do thee all well,
 As thou in thy youthful life quothest of yore,
 That naught wouldst thou let, while still thou wert living,
 Thy glory fade out. Now shalt thou of deeds famed,
 The Atheling of single heart, with all thy main deal
 For the warding thy life, and to stay thee I will."

Wiglaf comes
 to Beowulf:
 the sword
 Nægling is
 broken

Then after these words all wroth came the Worm,
 The dire guest foesome, that second of whiles
 With fire-wellings flecked, his foes to go look on,
 The loath men. With flame was lightly then burnt up
 The board to the boss, and might not the byrny
 To the warrior the young frame any help yet.
 But so the young man under shield of his kinsman
 Went onward with valour, whenas his own was
 All undone with gleeds; then again the war-king
 Remember'd his glories, and smote with main might
 With his battle-bill, so that it stood in the head
 Need-driven by war-hate. Then asunder burst Nægling,
 Waxed weak in the war-tide, e'en Beowulf's sword,
 The old and grey-marked; to him was not given
 That to him any whit might the edges of irons
 Be helpful in battle; over-strong was the hand
 Which every of swords, by the hearsay of me,
 With its swing over-wrought, when he bare unto strife
 A wondrous hard weapon; naught it was to him better.

Then was the folk-scather for the third of times yet,
 The fierce fire-drake, all mindful of feud;

Beowulf

He rac'd on that strong one, when was room to him given,
Hot and battle-grim; he all the halse of him gripped
With bitter-keen bones; all bebloody'd he waxed
With the gore of his soul. Well'd in waves then the war-sweat.

XXXVII. THEY TWO SLAY THE WORM. BEO-
WULF IS WOUNDED DEADLY: HE BIDDETH
WIGLAF BEAR OUT THE TREASURE.

THEN heard I that at need of the high king of folk
The upright earl made well manifest might,
His craft and his keenness as kind was to him;
The head there he heeded not (but the hand burned
Of that man of high mood when he helped his kinsman),
Whereas he now the hate-guest smote yet a deal nether,
That warrior in war-gear, whereby the sword dived,
The plated, of fair hue, and thereby fell the flame
To minish thereafter, and once more the king's self
Wielded his wit, and his slaying-sax drew out,
The bitter and battle-sharp, borne on his byrny;
Asunder the Weder's helm smote the Worm midmost;
They felled the fiend, and force drave the life out,
And they twain together had gotten him ending,
Those Athelings sib.

E'en such should a man be,
A thane good at need.

Beowulf
knoweth his
bane-wound

Now that to the king was
The last victory-while, by the deeds of himself,
Of his work of the world. Sithence fell the wound,
That the earth-drake to him had wrought but erewhile,
To swell and to sweal; and this soon he found out,
That down in the breast of him bale-evil welled,
The venom withinward; then the Atheling wended,
So that he by the wall, bethinking him wisdom,
Sat on seat there and saw on the works of the giants,
How that the stone-bows fast stood on pillars,
The earth-house everlasting upheld withinward.

Then with his hand him the sword-gory,
 That great king his thane, the good beyond measure,
 His friend-lord with water washed full well,
 The sated of battle, and unspann'd his war-helm.

Forth then spake Beowulf, and over his wound said,
 His wound piteous deadly; wist he full well,
 That now of his day-whiles all had he dreed,
 Of the joy of the earth; all was shaken asunder
 The tale of his days; death without measure nigh:

“Unto my son now should I be giving
 My gear of the battle, if to me it were granted
 Any ward of the heritage after my days
 To my body belonging. This folk have I holden
 Fifty winters; forsooth was never a folk-king
 Of the sitters around, no one of them soothly,
 Who me with the war-friends durst wend him to greet
 And bear down with the terror. In home have I abided
 The shapings of whiles, and held mine own well.
 No wily hates sought I; for myself swore not many
 Of oaths in unright. For all this may I,
 Sick with the life-wounds, soothly have joy.
 Therefore naught need wyte me the Wielder of men
 With kin murder-bale, when breaketh asunder
 My life from my lyke. And now lightly go thou
 To look on the hoard under the hoar stone,
 Wiglaf mine lief, now that lieth the Worm
 And sleepeth sore wounded, beshorn of his treasure;
 And be hasty that I now the wealth of old time,
 The gold-having may look on, and yarely behold
 The bright cunning gems, that the softer may I
 After the treasure-weal let go away
 My life, and the folk-ship that long I have held.”

XXXVIII. BEOWULF BEHOLDETH THE TREASURE AND PASSETH AWAY.

THEN heard I that swiftly the son of that Weohstan
After this word-say his lord the sore wounded,
Battle-sick, there obeyed, and bare forth his ring-net,
His battle-sark woven, in under the burg-roof;
Saw then victory-glad as by the seat went he,
The kindred-thane moody, sun-jewels a many,
Much glistening gold lying down on the ground,
Many wonders on wall, and the den of the Worm,
The old twilight-flier; there were flagons a-standing,
The vats of men bygone, of brighteners bereft,
And maim'd of adornment; was many an helm
Rusty and old, and of arm-rings a many
Full cunningly twined.

All lightly may treasure,
The gold in the ground, every one of mankind
Befool with o'erweening, hide it who will.

Beowulf is
shown the
treasure

Likewise he saw standing a sign there all-golden
High over the hoard, the most of hand-wonders,
With limb-craft belocked, whence light a ray gleamed,
Whereby the den's ground-plain gat he to look on,
The fair works scan throughly. Not of the Worm there
Was aught to be seen now, but the edge had undone him.
Heard I then that in howe of the hoard was bereaving,
The old work of the giants, but one man alone,
Into his barm laded beakers and dishes
At his very own doom; and the sign eke he took,
The brightest of beacons. But the bill of the old lord
(The edge was of iron) erewhile it scathed
Him who of that treasure hand-bearer was
A long while, and fared a-bearing the flame-dread
Before the hoard hot, and welling of fierceness
In the midnights, until that by murder he died.

In haste was the messenger, eager of back-fare,
Further'd with fretted gems. Him longing fordid

To wot whether the bold man he quick there shall meet
In that mead-stead, e'en he the King of the Weders,
All sick of his might, whereas he erst left him.

Beowulf

He fetching the treasure then found the King mighty,
His own lord, yet there, and him ever all gory
At end of his life; and he yet once again
Fell the water to warp o'er him, till the word's point
Brake through the breast-hoard, and Beowulf spake out,
The aged, in grief as he gaz'd on the gold:

"Now I for these fretworks to the Lord of all thanking,
To the King of all glory, in words am yet saying,
To the Lord ever living, for that which I look on;
Whereas such I might for the people of mine,
Ere ever my death-day, get me to own.
Now that for the treasure-hoard here have I sold
My life and laid down the same, frame still then ever
The folk-need, for here never longer I may be.
So bid ye the war-mighty work me a howe
Bright after the bale-fire at the sea's nose,
Which for a remembrance to the people of me
Aloft shall uplift him at Whale-ness for ever,
That it the sea-goers sithence may hote
Beowulf's Howe, e'en they that the high-ships
Over the flood-mists drive from afar."

Did off from his halse then a ring was all golden,
The King the great-hearted, and gave to his thane,
To the spear-warrior young his war-helm gold-brindled,
The ring and the byrny, and bade him well brook them:

"Thou art the end-leaving of all of our kindred,
The Wægmundings; Weird now hath swept all away
Of my kinsmen, and unto the doom of the Maker
The earls in their might; now after them shall I."

That was to the aged lord youngest of words
Of his breast-thoughts, ere ever he chose him the bale,
The hot battle-wellings; from his heart now departed
His soul, to seek out the doom of the soothfast.

XXXIX. WIGLAF CASTETH SHAME ON THOSE
FLEERS.

The blenchers
come to behold
Beowulf and
Wiglaf

BUT gone was it then with the unaged man
Full hard that there he beheld on the earth
The liefest of friends at the ending of life,
Of bearing most piteous. And likewise lay his bane
The Earth-drake, the loathly fear, reft of his life,
By bale laid undone: the ring-hoards no longer
The Worm, the crook-bowed, ever might wield;
For soothly the edges of the irons him bare off,
The hard battle-sharded leavings of hammers,
So that the wide-flier stilled with wounding
Fell onto earth anigh to his hoard-hall,
Nor along the lift ever more playing he turned
At middle-nights, proud of the owning of treasure,
Show'd the face of him forth, but to earth there he fell
Because of the host-leader's work of the hand.

This forsooth on the land hath thriven to few,
Of men might and main bearing, by hearsay of mine,
Though in each of all deeds full daring he were,
That against venom-scather's fell breathing he set on,
Or the hall of his rings with hand be a-stirring,
If so be that he waking the warder had found
Abiding in burg.

By Beowulf was
His deal of the king-treasure paid for by death;
There either had they fared on to the end
Of this loaned life.

Long it was not until
Those laggards of battle the holt were a-leaving,
Unwarlike troth-liars, the ten there together,
Who durst not e'en now with darts to be playing
E'en in their man-lord's most mickle need.
But shamefully now their shields were they bearing,
Their weed of the battle, there where lay the aged;
They gazed on Wiglaf where weary'd he sat,

The foot-champion, hard by his very lord's shoulder,
And wak'd him with water: but no whit it sped him;
Never might he on earth howsoe'er well he will'd it
In that leader of spears hold the life any more,
Nor the will of the Wielder change ever a whit;
But still should God's doom of deeds rule the rede
For each man of men, as yet ever it doth.

Beowulf

Then from out of the youngling an answer full grim
Easy got was for him who had lost heart erewhile,
And word gave out Wiglaf, Weohstan's son,
The sorrowful-soul'd man: on those unliefe he saw:
"Lo that may he say who sooth would be saying,
That the man-lord who dealt you the gift of those dear things,
The gear of the war-host wherein there ye stand,
Whereas he on the ale-bench full oft was a-giving
Unto the hall-sitters war-helm and byrny,
The king to his thanes, e'en such as he choicest
Anywhere, far or near, ever might find:
That he utterly wrongs those weeds of the war
Had cast away, then when the war overtook him.
Surely never the folk-king of his fellows in battle
Had need to be boastful; howsoever God gave him,
The Victory-wielder, that he himself wreak'd him
Alone with the edge, when to him need of might was.
Unto him of life-warding but little might I
Give there in the war-tide; and yet I began
Above measure of my might my kinsman to help;
Ever worse was the Worm then when I with sword
Smote the life-foe, and ever the fire less strongly
Welled out from his wit. Of warders o'er little
Throng'd about the king when him the battle befell.

Wiglaf layeth
the wyte on
them

"Now shall taking of treasures and giving of swords
And all joy of your country-home fail from your kindred,
All hope wane away; of the land-right moreover
May each of the men of that kinsman's burg ever
Roam lacking; sithence that the Athelings eftsoons
From afar shall have heard of your faring in flight,

Beowulf Your gloryless deed. Yea, death shall be better
For each of the earls than a life ever ill-fam'd."

XL. WIGLAF SENDETH TIDING TO THE
HOST: THE WORDS OF THE MESSENGER.

The messenger
cometh to the
host

THEN he bade them that war-work give out at the barriers
Up over the sea-cliff, whereas then the earl-host
The morning-long day sat sad of their mood,
The bearers of war-boards, in weening of both things,
Either the end-day, or else the back-coming
Of the lief man. Forsooth he little was silent
Of the new-fallen tidings who over the ness rode,
But soothly he said over all there a-sitting:
"Now is the will-giver of the folk of the Weders,
The lord of the Geats, fast laid in the death-bed,
In the slaughter-rest wonneth he by the Worm's doings.
And beside him yet lieth his very life-winner
All sick with the sax-wounds; with sword might he never
On the monster, the fell one, in any of manners
Work wounding at all. There yet sitteth Wiglaf,
Weohstan's own boy, over Beowulf king,
One earl over the other, over him the unliving;
With heart-honours holdeth he head-ward withal
Over lief, over loath.

He telleth of
old wars

"But to folk is a weening
Of war-tide as now, so soon as unhidden
To Franks and to Frisians the fall of the king
Is become over widely. Once was the strife shapen
Hard 'gainst the Hugs, sithence Hygelac came
Faring with float-host to Frisian land,
Whereas him the Hetware vanquish'd in war,
With might gat the gain, with o'er-mickle main;
The warrior bebyrny'd he needs must bow down:
He fell in the host, and no fretted war-gear
Gave that lord to the doughty, but to us was aye sithence
The mercy ungranted that was of the Merwing.

Nor do I from the Swede-folk of peace or good faith
 Ween ever a whit. For widely 'twas wotted
 That Ongentheow erst had undone the life
 Of Hæthcyn the Hrethel's son hard by the Raven-wood,
 Then when in their pride the Scylfings of war
 Erst gat them to seek to the folk of the Geats.
 Unto him soon the old one, the father of Ohthere,
 The ancient and fearful, gave back the hand-stroke,
 Brake up the sea-wise one, rescued his bride,
 The aged his spouse erst, bereft of the gold,
 Mother of Onela, yea and of Ohthere;
 And follow'd up thereon his foemen the deadly,
 Until they betook them and sorrowfully therewith
 Unto the Raven-holt, reft of their lord.
 With huge host then beset he the leaving of swords
 All weary with wounds, and woe he behight them,
 That lot of the wretched, the livelong night through;
 Quoth he that the morrow's morn with the swords' edges
 He would do them to death, hang some on the gallows
 For a game unto fowl. But again befell comfort
 To the sorry of mood with the morrow-day early;
 Whereas they of Hygelac's war-horn and trumpet
 The voice wotted, whenas the good king his ways came
 Faring on in the track of his folk's doughty men."

Beowulf

Ongentheow
 slew Hæthcyn
 who was
 avenged by
 Hygelac

XLI. MORE WORDS OF THE MESSENGER.
HOW HE FEARS THE SWEDES WHEN THEY
WOT OF BEOWULF DEAD.

WAS the track of the war-sweat of Swedes and of Geats,
 The men's slaughter-race, right wide to be seen,
 How those folks amongst them were waking the feud.
 Departed that good one, and went with his fellows,
 Old and exceeding sad, fastness to seek;
 The earl Ongentheow upward returned;
 Of Hygelac's battle-might oft had he heard,
 The war-craft of the proud one; in withstanding he trow'd not,
 That he to the sea-folk in fight might debate,
 Or against the sea-farers defend him his hoard,
 His bairns and his bride. He bow'd him aback thence,
 The old under the earth-wall. Then was the chase bidden
 To the Swede-folk, and Hygelac's sign was up-reared,
 And the plain of the peace forth on o'er-pass'd they,
 After the Hrethlings onto the hedge throng'd.
 "There then was Ongentheow by the swords' edges,
 The blent-hair'd, the hoary one, driven to biding,
 So that the folk-king fain must he take
 Sole doom of Eofor. Him in his wrath then
 Wulf the Wonreding reach'd with his weapon,
 So that from the stroke sprang the war-sweat in streams
 Forth from under his hair; yet naught fearsome was he,
 The aged, the Scylfing, but paid aback rathely
 With chaffer that worse was, that war-crash of slaughter,
 Sithence the folk-king turned him thither;
 And nowise might the brisk one that son was of Wonred
 Unto the old carle give back the hand-slaying,
 For that he on Wulf's head the helm erst had sheared,
 So that all with the blood stained needs must he bow,
 And fell on the field; but not yet was he fey,
 But he warp'd himself up, though the wound had touch'd nigh.
 But thereon the hard Hygelac's thane there,
 Whenas down lay his brother, let the broad blade,

He feareth the
Swede-folk

Eofor comes
to the rescue
of Wulf

The old sword of eotens, that helm giant-fashion'd
 Break over the board-wall, and down the King bowed,
 The Herd of the folk unto fair life was smitten.
 There were many about there who bound up his kinsman,
 Upraised him swiftly when room there was made them,
 That the slaughter-stead thereat the stour they might wield,
 That while when was reaving one warrior the other:
 From Ongentheow took he the iron-wrought byrny,
 The hard-hilted sword, with his helm all together:
 The hoary one's harness to Hygelac bare he;
 The fret war-gear then took he, and fairly behight him
 Before the folk due gifts, and even so did it;
 Gild he gave for that war-race, the lord of the Geats,
 The own son of Hrethel, when home was he come,
 To Eofor and Wulf gave he over-much treasure,
 To them either he gave an hundred of thousands,
 Land and lock'd rings. Of the gift none needed to wyte him
 Of mid earth, since the glory they gained by battle.
 Then to Eofor he gave his one only daughter,
 An home-worship soothly, for pledge of his good will.

Beowulf

"That is the feud and the foeship full soothly,
 The dead-hate of men, e'en as I have a weening,
 Wherefor the Swede people against us shall seek,
 Sithence they have learned that lieth our lord
 All lifeless; e'en he that erewhile hath held
 Against all the haters the hoard and the realm;
 Who after the heroes' fall held the fierce Scylfings,
 Framed the folk-rede, and further thereto
 Did earlship-deeds.

He forebodeth
 evil

"Now is haste best of all
 That we now the folk-king should fare to be seeing,
 And then that we bring him who gave us the rings
 On his way to the bale: nor shall somewhat alone
 With the moody be molten; but manifold hoard is,
 Gold untold of by tale that grinly is cheapen'd,
 And now at the last by this one's own life

Beowulf

Are rings bought, and all these the brand now shall fret,
The flame thatch them over: no earl shall bear off
One gem in remembrance; nor any fair maiden
Shall have on her halse a ring-honour thereof,
But in grief of mood henceforth, bereaved of gold,
Shall oft, and not once alone, alien earth tread,
Now that the host-learn'd hath laid aside laughter,
The game and the glee-joy. Therefore shall the spear,
Full many a morn-cold, of hands be bewounden,
Uphoven in hand; and no swough of the harp
Shall waken the warriors; but the wan raven rather
Fain over the fey many tales shall tell forth,
And say to the erne how it sped him at eating,
While he with the wolf was a-spoiling the slain."

So was the keen-whetted a-saying this while
Spells of speech loathly; he lied not much
Of weirds or of words. Then uprose all the war-band,
And unblithe they wended under the Ernes-ness,
All welling of tears, the wonder to look on.
Found they then on the sand, now lacking of soul,
Holding his bed, him that gave them the rings
In time erewhile gone by. But then was the end-day
Gone for the good one; since the king of the battle,
The lord of the Weders, in wonder-death died.
But erst there they saw a more seldom-seen sight,
The Worm on the lea-land over against him
Down lying there loathly; there was the fire-drake,
The grim of the terrors, with gleeds all beswealed.
He was of fifty feet of his measure
Long of his lying. Lift-joyance held he
In the whiles of the night, but down again wended
To visit his den. Now fast was he in death,
He had of the earth-dens the last end enjoyed.
There by him now stood the beakers and bowls,
There lay the dishes and dearly-wrought swords,
Rusty, through-eaten they, as in earth's bosom
A thousand of winters there they had wonned.

For that heritage there was, all craftily eked,
Gold of the yore men, in wizardry wounden;
So that that ring-hall might none reach thereto,
Not any of mankind but if God his own self,
Sooth King of victories, gave unto whom he would
(He is holder of men) to open that hoard,
E'en to whichso of mankind should seem to him meet.

Beowulf

XLII. THEY GO TO LOOK ON THE FIELD OF DEED.

THEN it was to be seen that throve not the way
To him that unrightly had hidden within there
The fair gear 'neath the wall. The warder erst slew
Some few of folk, and the feud then became
Wrothfully wreaked. A wonder whenas
A valour-strong earl may reach on the ending
Of the fashion of life, when he longer in nowise
One man with his kinsmen may dwell in the mead-hall!
So to Beowulf was it when the burg's ward he sought,
For the hate of the weapons: he himself knew not
Wherethrough forsooth his world's sundering should be.
So until Doomsday they cursed it deeply,
Those princes the dread, who erst there had done it,
That that man should be of sins never sackless,
A-hoppled in shrines, in hell-bonds fast set,
With plague-spots be punish'd, who that plain should plunder.
But naught gold-greedy was he, more gladly had he
The grace of the Owner erst gotten to see.

Wiglaf
speaketh
to them

Now spake out Wiglaf, that son was of Weohstan:
"Oft shall many an earl for the will but of one
Dree the wrack, as to us even now is befallen:
Nowise might we learn the lief lord of us,
The herd of the realm, any of rede,
That he should not go greet that warder of gold,
But let him live yet, whereas long he was lying,

Beowulf

He biddeth
them array
the bale

And wonne in his wicks until the world's ending;
But he held to high weird and the hoard hath been seen,
Grimly gotten: o'er hard forsooth was that giving,
That the King of the folk e'en thither enticed.
Lo! I was therein, and I look'd it all over,
The gear of the house, when for me room was gotten,
But I lightly in nowise had leave for the passage
In under the earth-wall; in haste I gat hold
Forsooth with my hands of a mickle main burden
Of hoard-treasures, and hither then out did I bear them
Out unto my king, and then quick was he yet,
Wise, and wit-holding: a many things spake he,
That aged in grief-care, and bade me to greet you,
And pray'd ye would do e'en after your friend's deeds
Aloft in the bale-stead a howe builded high,
Most mickle and mighty, as he amongst men was
The worthfullest warrior wide over the world,
While he the burg-weal erewhile might brook.
Then so let us hasten this second of whiles
To see and to seek the throng of things strange,
The wonder 'neath wall; I shall wise you the way,
So that ye from a-near may look on enough
Of rings and broad gold; and be the bier swiftly
All yare thereunto, whenas out we shall fare.
Then let us so ferry the lord that was ours,
The lief man of men, to where long shall he
In the All-Wielder's keeping full patiently wait."

Bade then to bid the bairn of that Weohstan,
The deer of the battle, to a many of warriors,
The house-owning wights, that the wood of the bale
They should ferry from far, e'en the folk-owning men,
Toward the Good One.

"And now shall the gleed fret away,
The wan flame a-waxing, the strong one of warriors,
Him who oft-times abided the shower of iron
When the storm of the shafts driven on by the strings

Shook over the shield-wall, and the shaft held its service,
And eager with feather-gear follow'd the barb." Beowulf

Now then the wise one, that son was of Weohstan,
Forth from the throng then call'd of the king's thanes
A seven together, the best to be gotten,
And himself went the eighth in under the foe-roof;
One man of the battlers in hand there he bare
A gleam of the fire, of the first went he inward.
It was nowise allotted who that hoard should despoil,
Sithence without warden some deal that there was
The men now beheld in the hall there a-wonning,
Lying there fleeting; little mourn'd any,
That they in all haste outward should ferry
The dear treasures. But forthwith the drake did they shove,
The Worm, o'er the cliff-wall, and let the wave take him,
The flood fathom about the fretted works' herd.

They lay
Beowulf
on the
bale

There then was wounden gold on the wain laden
Untold of each kind, and the Atheling borne,
The hoary of warriors, out on to Whale-ness.

XLIII. OF THE BURIAL OF BEOWULF.

FOR him then they geared, the folk of the Geats,
A pile on the earth all unweaklike that was,
With war-helms behung, and with boards of the battle,
And bright byrnies, e'en after the boon that he bade.
Laid down then amidmost their king mighty-famous
The warriors lamenting, the lief lord of them.
Began on the burg of bale-fires the biggest
The warriors to waken: the wood-reek went up
Swart over the smoky glow, sound of the flame
Bewound with the weeping (the wind-blending stilled),
Until it at last the bone-house had broken
Hot at the heart. All unglad of mind
With mood-care they mourned their own liege lord's quelling.
Likewise a sad lay the wife of aforeside

Beowulf For Beowulf the King, with her hair all upbounden,
Sang sorrow-careful; said oft and over
That harm-days for herself in hard wise she dreaded,
The slaughter-falls many, much fear of the warrior,
The shaming and bondage. Heaven swallow'd the reek.

The last word
concerning
Beowulf

Wrought there and fashion'd the folk of the Weders
A howe on the lithe, that high was and broad,
Unto the wave-farers wide to be seen:
Then it they betimber'd in time of ten days,
The battle-strong's beacon; the brands' very leavings
They bewrought with a wall in the worthiest of ways,
That men of all wisdom might find how to work.

Into burg then they did the rings and bright sun-gems,
And all such adornments as in the hoard there
The war-minded men had taken e'en now;
The earls' treasures let they the earth to be holding,
Gold in the grit, wherein yet it liveth,
As useless to men-folk as ever it erst was.

Then round the howe rode the deer of the battle,
The bairns of the Athelings, twelve were they in all.
Their care would they mourn, and bemoan them their king,
The word-lay would they utter and over the man speak:
They accounted his earlship and mighty deeds done,
And doughtily deem'd them; as due as it is
That each one his friend-lord with words should belaud,
And love in his heart, whenas forth shall he
Away from the body be fleeting at last.

In such wise they grieved, the folk of the Geats,
For the fall of their lord, e'en they his hearth-fellows;
Quoth they that he was a world-king forsooth,
The mildest of all men, unto men kindest,
To his folk the most gentlest, most yearning of fame.

PERSONS AND PLACES

The numbers refer to pages.

BEANSTAN, father of Breca (194).
Beowulf the Dane (not Beowulf the Geat, the hero of the poem) was the grandfather of Hrothgar (179, 180).

Beowulf the Geat. See the Argument.

Breca who contended with Beowulf in swimming, was a chief of the Brondings (194).

Brisings' neck-gear (215). "This necklace is the Brisngamen, the costly necklace of Freyja, which she won from the dwarfs and which was stolen from her by Loki, as is told in the Edda" (Kemble). In our poem, it is said that Hama carried off this necklace when he fled from Eormenric, king of the Ostrogoths.

Day-raven (254), a brave warrior of the Hugs, and probably the slayer of Hygelac, whom, in that case, Beowulf avenged.

Eadgils, Eanmund (251), "sons of Ohthere," and nephews of the Swedish King Onela, by whom they were banished from their native land for rebellion. They took refuge at the court of the Geat King Heardred, and Onela, "Ongentheow's bairn," enraged at their finding an asylum with his hereditary foes, invaded Geatland, and slew Heardred. At a later time Beowulf, when king of the Geats, balanced the feud by supporting Eadgils in an invasion of Sweden, in which King Onela was slain.

Eanmund (257), while in exile at the court of the Geats, was slain by Weohstan, father of Wiglaf, and stripped of the armour given him by his uncle, the Swedish King Onela. Weohstan "spake not about the feud, although he had slain Onela's brother's son," probably because he was not proud of having slain an "exile unfriended" in a private quarrel.

Ecglaef, father of Unferth, Hrothgar's spokesman (194).

Ecgtheow (190), father of Beowulf the Geat, by the only

Beowulf

daughter of Hrethel, king of the Geats. Having slain Heatholaf, a warrior of the Wylfings, Ecgtheow sought protection at the court of the Danish King Hrothgar, who accepted his fealty and settled the feud by a money-payment (192). Hence the heartiness of Beowulf's welcome at Hrothgar's hands.

Ecgwela. The Scyldings or Danes are once called "Ecgwela's offspring" (230). He may have been the founder of the older dynasty of Danish kings which ended with Heremod.

Eofor (254, 268-9), a Geat warrior, brother of Wulf. He came to the aid of his brother in his single combat with the Swedish King Ongentheow, and slew the king, being rewarded by Hygelac with the hand of his only daughter.

Eotens (211-3) are the people of Finn, king of Friesland. In other passages, it is merely a name for a race of monsters.

Finn (211-4). The somewhat obscure Finn episode in "Beowulf" appears to be part of a Finn epic, of which only the merest fragment, called the "Fight at Finnsburg," is extant. The following conjectured outline of the whole story is based on this fragment & on the Beowulf episode: Finn, king of the Frisians, had carried off Hildeburh, daughter of Hoc, probably with her consent. Her father, Hoc, seems to have pursued the fugitives, and to have been slain in the fight which ensued on his overtaking them. After the lapse of some twenty years Hoc's sons, Hnæf and Hengest, are old enough to undertake the duty of avenging their father's death. They make an inroad into Finn's country, and a battle takes place in which many warriors, among them Hnæf and a son of Finn, are killed. Peace is then solemnly concluded, and the slain warriors are burnt.

As the year is too far advanced for Hengest to return home, he and those of his men who survive remain for the winter in the Frisian country with Finn. But Hengest's thoughts dwell constantly on the death of his brother Hnæf, and he would gladly welcome any excuse to break

the peace which had been sworn by both parties. His ill-concealed desire for revenge is noticed by the Frisians, who anticipate it by themselves attacking Hengest and his men whilst they are sleeping in the hall. This is the night attack described in the "Fight at Finnsburg." It would seem that after a brave and desperate resistance Hengest himself falls in this fight at the hands of the son of Hunlaf (213), but two of his retainers, Guthlaf and Oslaf, succeed in cutting their way through their enemies and in escaping to their own land. They return with fresh troops, attack and slay Finn, and carry his queen Hildeburh back to the Daneland.

Folkwalda (212), father of Finn.

Franks (215, 266). Hygelac, king of the Geats, was defeated and slain early in the sixth century, in his historical invasion of the Netherlands, by a combined army of Frisians, Franks, and Hugs.

Freawaru (239), daughter of Hrothgar and Wealhtheow. Beowulf tells Hygelac that her father has betrothed her to Ingeld, prince of the Heathobards, in the hope of settling the feud between the two peoples. But he prophesies that the hope will prove vain: for an old Heathobard warrior, seeing a Danish chieftain accompany Freawaru to their court laden with Heathobard spoils, will incite the son of the former owner of the plundered treasure to revenge, until blood is shed, and the feud is renewed. That this was what afterwards befell, we learn from the Old English poem "Widsith." See also page 181 ll. 18-20.

Friesland (213), the land of the North Frisians.

Frieslands (250), Frisian land (266), the home of the West Frisians.

Frisians. Two tribes are to be distinguished: 1. The North Frisians (211-2), the people of Finn. 2. The West Frisians (254, 266), who combined with the Franks and Hugs and defeated Hygelac, between 512 and 520 A.D.

Froda (240), father of Ingeld. See Freawaru.

Guthlaf and Oslaf (213). See Finn.

Hæreth (237-8), father of Hygd, wife of Hygelac.

- Beowulf Hæthcyn (252, 254, 267), second son of Hrethel, king of the Geats, and thus elder brother of Hygelac. He accidentally killed his elder brother Herebeald with a bow-shot, to the inconsolable grief of Hrethel. He succeeded to the throne at his father's death, but fell in battle at Raven-wood (267) by the hand of the Swedish King Ongentheow.
- Half-Danes (211), the tribe to which Hnæf belongs. See Finn.
- Hama (215). See Brisings.
- Healfdene (180), king of the Danes, son of Beowulf the Scylding, and father of Hrothgar, "Healfdene's son" (186).
- Heardred (245, 250-1), son of Hygelac and Hygd. While still under age he succeeds his father as king of the Geats, Beowulf, who has refused the throne himself, being his counsellor and protector. He is slain by "Ongentheow's bairn" (251), Onela, king of the Swedes.
- Heathobards, Lombards, the tribe of Ingeld, the betrothed of Freawaru, Hrothgar's daughter (240).
- Heatholaf (192). See Ecgtheow.
- Helmings. "The Dame of the Helmings" (197) is Hrothgar's queen, Wealhtheow.
- Hemming. "The Kinsman of Hemming" is a name for Offa (237) and for his son Eomær (238).
- Hengest (211-3). See Finn.
- Heorogar (180), elder brother of Hrothgar (192), did not leave his armour to his son Heoroward (244); but Hrothgar gives it to Beowulf, and Beowulf gives it to Hygelac.
- Herebeald (252-3), eldest son of the Geat King Hrethel, was accidentally shot dead with an arrow by his brother Hæthcyn.
- Heremod (206, 230) is twice spoken of as a bad and cruel Danish king. In the end he is betrayed into the hands of his foes.
- Hereric may have been brother of Hygd, Hygelac's queen,

- for their son Heardred is spoken of as "the nephew of Beowulf Hereric" (245).
- Here-Scyldings (212), Army-Scyldings, a name of the Danes.
- Hetware (250, 266), the Hattuarii of the "Historia Francorum" of Gregory of Tours and of the "Gesta Regum Francorum," were the tribe against which Hygelac was raiding when he was defeated and slain by an army of Frisians, Franks, and Hugs.
- Hildeburh (211-2). See Finn.
- Hnæf (211-2). See Finn.
- Hoc (211). See Finn.
- Hrethel, a former king of the Geats (190); son of Swerting (215), father of Hygelac and grandfather of Beowulf (190), to whom he left his coat of mail (192). He died of grief at the loss of his eldest son Herebeald (252-3), who was accidentally slain by his brother Hæthcyn.
- Hrethlings (268), the people of Hrethel, the Geats.
- Hrethmen (192), Triumph-men, the Danes.
- Hrethric (215, 234), elder son of Hrothgar and Wealhtheow.
- Hrothgar. See the Argument.
- Hrothulf (209, 214), probably the son of Hrothgar's younger brother Halga (180). He lives at the Danish court. Wealhtheow hopes that, if he survives Hrothgar, he will be good to their children in return for their kindness to him. It would seem that this hope was not to be fulfilled ("yet of kindred unsunder'd," 214).
- Hygd, daughter of Hæreth, wife of Hygelac, the king of the Geats, and mother of Heardred. She may well be "the wife of aforetime" (273).
- Hygelac, third son of Hrethel (252) and uncle to Beowulf, is the reigning king of the Geats during the greater part of the action of the poem. When his brother Hæthcyn was defeated and slain by Ongentheow at Raven-wood (267), Hygelac quickly went in pursuit and put Ongentheow to flight; but although, as leader of the attack, he is called

Beowulf

"the banesman of Ongentheow" (238), the actual slayer was Eofof (254, 268), whom Hygelac rewarded with the hand of his only daughter (269). Hygelac came by his death between 512 and 520 A.D., in his historical invasion of the Netherlands, which is referred to in the poem four times (215, 250, 254, 266).

Ing (256). See Ingwines.

Ingeld (241). See Freawaru.

Ingwines (210, 219), "friends of Ing," the Danes. Ing, according to the Old English Rune-Poem, "was first seen by men amid the East Danes;" he has been identified with Frea.

Merwing, The (266), the Merovingian king of the Franks.

Offa (238). See Thrytho.

Ohthere (251, 267), son of the Swedish King Ongentheow, and father of Eanmund and Eadgils (q.v.).

Onela, "Ongentheow's bairn" (251) and elder brother of Ohthere, is king of Sweden ("the Helm of the Scylfings," 251) at the time of the rebellion of Eanmund and Eadgils. He invades the land of the Geats, which has harboured the rebels, slays Heardred, son of Hygelac, and then retreats before Beowulf. At a later time Beowulf avenges the death of Heardred by supporting Eadgils, "son of Ohthere" (251), in an invasion of Sweden, in which Onela is slain. See also Eadgils; and compare the slaying of Ali by Athils on the ice of Lake Wener in the Icelandic "Heimskringla."

Ongentheow, father of Onela and Ohthere, was a former king of the Swedes. The earlier strife between the Swedes and the Geats, in which he is the chief figure, is fully related by the messenger (267) who brings the tidings of Beowulf's death. In retaliation for the marauding invasions of Onela and Ohthere (254), Hæthcyn invaded Sweden, and took Ongentheow's queen prisoner. Ongentheow in return invaded the land of her captor, whom he slew, and rescued his wife (267); but in his hour of tri-

- umph he was attacked in his turn by Hygelac near Raven-wood, and fell by the hand of Eofor (268). Beowulf
- Scaney (230), Scede-lands (179), the most southern portion of the Scandinavian peninsula, belonging to the Danes; used in our poem for the whole Danish kingdom.
- Scyld (179), son of Sheaf, was the mythical founder of the royal Danish dynasty of Scyldings.
- Scyldings, descendants of Scyld, properly the name of the reigning Danish dynasty, is commonly extended to include the Danish people (179).
- Scylfing: "the Scylfing" (268), "the aged of Scylfings" (254), is Ongentheow.
- Scylfings (251), the name of the reigning Swedish dynasty, was extended to the Swedish people in the same way as "Scyldings" to the Danes. Beowulf's kinsman Wiglaf is called "lord of Scylfings" (257), and in another passage the name is apparently applied to the Geats (269); this seems to point to a common ancestry of Swedes and Geats, or it may be that Beowulf's father Ecgtheow was a "Scylfing."
- Thrytho (237), wife of the Angle King Offa and mother of Eomær, is mentioned in contrast to Hygd, just as Here-mod is a foil to Beowulf. She is at first the type of a cruel, unwomanly queen. But by her marriage with Offa, who seems to be her second husband, she is subdued and changed until her fame even adds glory to his.
- Unferth, son of Ecglaf, is the spokesman of Hrothgar, at whose feet he sits. He is of a jealous disposition, and is twice spoken of as the murderer of his own brothers (196, 214). Taunting Beowulf with defeat in his swimming-match with Breca, he is silenced by the hero's reply, and more effectually still by the issue of the struggle with Grendel (208). Afterwards, however, he lends his sword Hrunting for Beowulf's encounter with Grendel's mother (223, 233).
- Wægmundings (257, 263), the family to which both Beo-

Beowulf wulf and Wiglaf belong. Their fathers, Ecgtheow and Weohstan, may have been sons of Wægmund.

Wedermark (187), the land of the Weder-Geats, i.e. the Geats.

Weders, Weder-Geats (185, 224, 242), Geats.

Weland (192), the Völund of the Edda, the famous smith of Teutonic legend, was the maker of Beowulf's coat of mail. See the figured casket in the British Museum; and compare "Wayland Smith's Cave" near the White Horse, in Berkshire.

Weohstan was the father of Beowulf's kinsman and faithful henchman Wiglaf, and the slayer of Eanmund (257).

Withergyld (240) is a warrior of the Heathobards.

Wonred, father of "Wulf the Wonreding (268), and of Eofor.

Wulf (268). See Eofor.

Wulfgar, "a lord of the Wendels" (189), is an official of Hrothgar's court, where he is the first to greet Beowulf and his Geats, and introduces them to Hrothgar.

THE MEANING OF SOME WORDS NOT COMMONLY USED NOW

Numbers refer to pages.

- | | |
|---|---|
| A-banning, the work was
(181): orders for the work
were given. | Dree: do, accomplish, suffer
enjoy, spend (261). |
| Arede (241): possess. | Ealdor: chief, lord. |
| Atheling: prince, noble, noble warrior. | Eme: uncle. |
| Barm: lap, bosom. | Eoten: giant, monster, enemy. |
| Behalsed (180): embraced by
the neck. | Fathom: embrace. |
| Berne: man, warrior, hero. | Feeless: not to be atoned for
with money. |
| Bestead (254): served. | Ferry: bring, carry. |
| Beswealed: scorched, burnt. | Fifel: monster. |
| Beswinked: sweated. | Flyting: contending, scolding. |
| Birlers: cup-bearers. | Fold: the earth. |
| Board: shield. | Forheed: disregard. |
| Bode: announce. | Forwritten: proscribed. |
| Bollen: swollen, angry. | Frist: space of time, delay. |
| Boot (183): compensation. | Gar: spear. |
| Boun (187): made ready. | Graithly: readily, well. |
| Braided (256): drew, lifted. | Halse: neck. |
| Brim: sea. | Hand-shoal: band of warriors. |
| Brook: use, enjoy. | Hery: praise. |
| Burg: fortified place, stronghold, mount, barrow; protection; protector; family
(264). | Hild-play: battle. |
| Byrny: coat of mail. | Holm: ocean, sea. |
| Devil-dray: nest of devils.
Cf. squirrel's-dray, common in Berks; used by
Cowper. | Holm-throng: eddy of the
sea. |
| Dreary: bloody. | Holt: wood. |
| | Hote: call. |
| | Howe: mound, burial-mound. |
| | Hythe: ferry, haven. |

Kemp: champion, fighter.
Lithe: slope.
Loom: heirloom.
Low (249): flame.
Lyke: body.
Moody: brave, proud.
Nicors: sea-monsters.
Nithing (184): spite, malice.
O'erthinking: overweening,
arrogance.
Rail, railings: coat, armour.
Rimed: counted, reckoned.
Sea-lode: sea-voyage.
Sin: malice, hatred, hostility.
Skinked: poured out.
Slot: track.
Staple: threshold.
Stone-bow: arch of stone.
Sty: stride, ascend, descend.

Sweal: burn.
Through-witting: understanding.
Undern: from 9 o'clock till
12 o'clock; "at undren
and at middai," O.E.
Miscellany.
Warths: shores, still in use
at Wick St. Lawrence, in
Somerset.
Wick: dwelling.
Wick-stead: dwelling-place.
Wise: direct, show.
Wit-lust: curiosity.
Worth: shall be.
Wreak: utter.
Wyte: blame, charge with.
Yare: ready.
Yode: went.